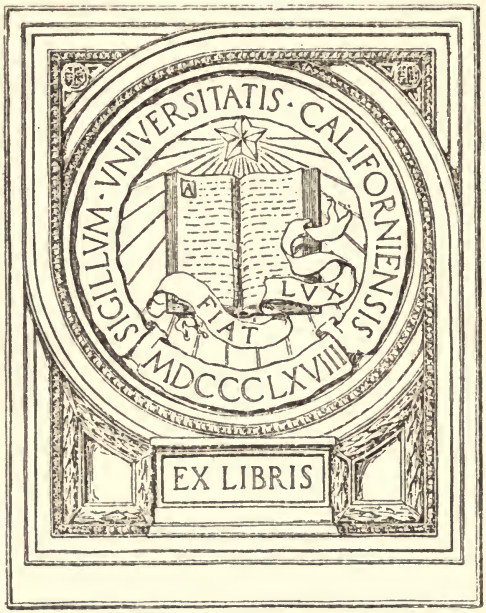
ON THE TRAIL OF THE PIONEERS

JOHN · T · FARIS

HISTORY I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ON THE TRAIL OF THE PIONEERS

JOHN T. FARIS

Of the progress of the souls of men
And women along the grand roads of the universe,
All other progress is the needed emblem and sustenance.

Forever alive, forever forward,
Stately, solemn, sad, withdrawing,
Baffled, mad turbulent, feeble, dissatisfied,
Desperate, proud, fond, sick, accepted by men,
Rejected by men,
They go! they go!

—Walt Whitman.

ON THE TRAIL OF THE PIONEERS

ROMANCE, TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH OF THE PATH OF EMPIRE

BY

JOHN T. FARIS

AUTHOR OF "REAL STORIES FROM OUR HISTORY," "OLD ROADS OUT OF PHILADELPHIA," "HISTORIC SHRINES OF AMERICA," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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HISTORY

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PREFACE

It is not the purpose of this volume to give in full detail the historical background of the successive great movements of population from the East to the country West of the Alleghenies; this ground has been covered by authors whose exhaustive books are named in the Bibliography.

"On the Trail of the Pioneers" gives glimpses of many of these great movements, the routes the emigrants took, and the sections to which they went. The endeavor is made to answer the questions, Who were the emigrants? How and where did they travel? What adventures did they have by the way? What were their impressions of the country through which they passed? What did they do when they reached their destinations? The book has been written because the author felt the need of which Claude S. Larzelere, in a paper on *The Teaching of Michigan History,* wrote:

We talk much in general terms in our American History classes about the westward movement of population. All too seldom do we take actual typical cases of emigrants moving to the West by way of the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, by the Cumberland Road and the Ohio River, or by other roads, bringing out the actual life on the road.

The graphic pictures of the struggles of actual emigrants emphasize as nothing else can the words of the author of *A Journey on the Mississippi River:*

The West is now a phrase of somewhat indefinite significance. Not very long ago it meant Pittsburgh. . . . Fifty years since,[1] Cincinnati was on the verge of the white

[1] Written in 1847.

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settlements. . . . Go to St. Louis . . . and you seem to be still as far from this point of the compass as you were at the beginning of your journey. Ask, as I have done, the emigrant who is trudging his weary course across the plains more than two hundred miles from the city of Laclede where he is going; his reply is, "To the West." . . . And now, at the northern pass of the Rocky Mountains, near the 49th parallel, and at the southern pass in the same range, leading to California, the same response, the West, the everlasting West, meets the ear.

It is interesting to note not only how this resistless onrush of the pioneers gave answer to the prophecies of pessimists who declared that it was useless to think of peopling the West from the East, but also how the emigration brought about changes in the boundaries and names of new states which optimistic travelers and statesmen tried to forecast. There were those who once looked for the organization of such states as Cumberland and Transylvania in the region south of the Ohio river; but the overwhelming growth of the country led to the early organization of the single state of Kentucky. Thomas Jefferson was a member of a committee which, in 1784, recommended the division of the country north of the Ohio into states to be called Sylvania, Michigania, Chersonese, Metropotamia, Illinoisa, Saratoga, Washington, Polypotamia and Pelisipia, but in consequence of the emigrant tide through the Pittsburgh and Buffalo gateways and down the Ohio, the boundaries and, in most cases, the names of the states became quite different.

The fascinating story of the movements that improved on the plan of Jefferson's committee, and went a long way to justify the hyperbole of Jean Pierre Brissot de Warville, "You will see independent America contemplating no other limits but those of the universe," is sketched in this volume.

Full use has been made of the records of early travelers and pioneers which are described in the Bibliography. Grateful acknowledgment is made for the use of copy-

righted material to Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers of *American History and Its Geographic Conditions* by Ellen Churchill Semple; to Little, Brown and Company, publishers of *The California and Oregon Trail* by Francis Parkman; to Lois Kimball Matthews, author of *The Erie Canal and the Settlement of the West;* to Yale University Press, publishers of *A Journey to Ohio in 1810*, by Margaret Dwight; to Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers of *The Making of the Ohio Valley States,* by Samuel Hopkins Adams, and *Audubon and His Journals,* by Maria R. Audubon; to Princeton University Press, publishers of *The New Purchase,* by Robert Carlton; to G. P. Putnam's Sons, publishers of *The Winning of the West,* by Theodore Roosevelt.

JOHN T. FARIS.

Philadelphia, 1920.

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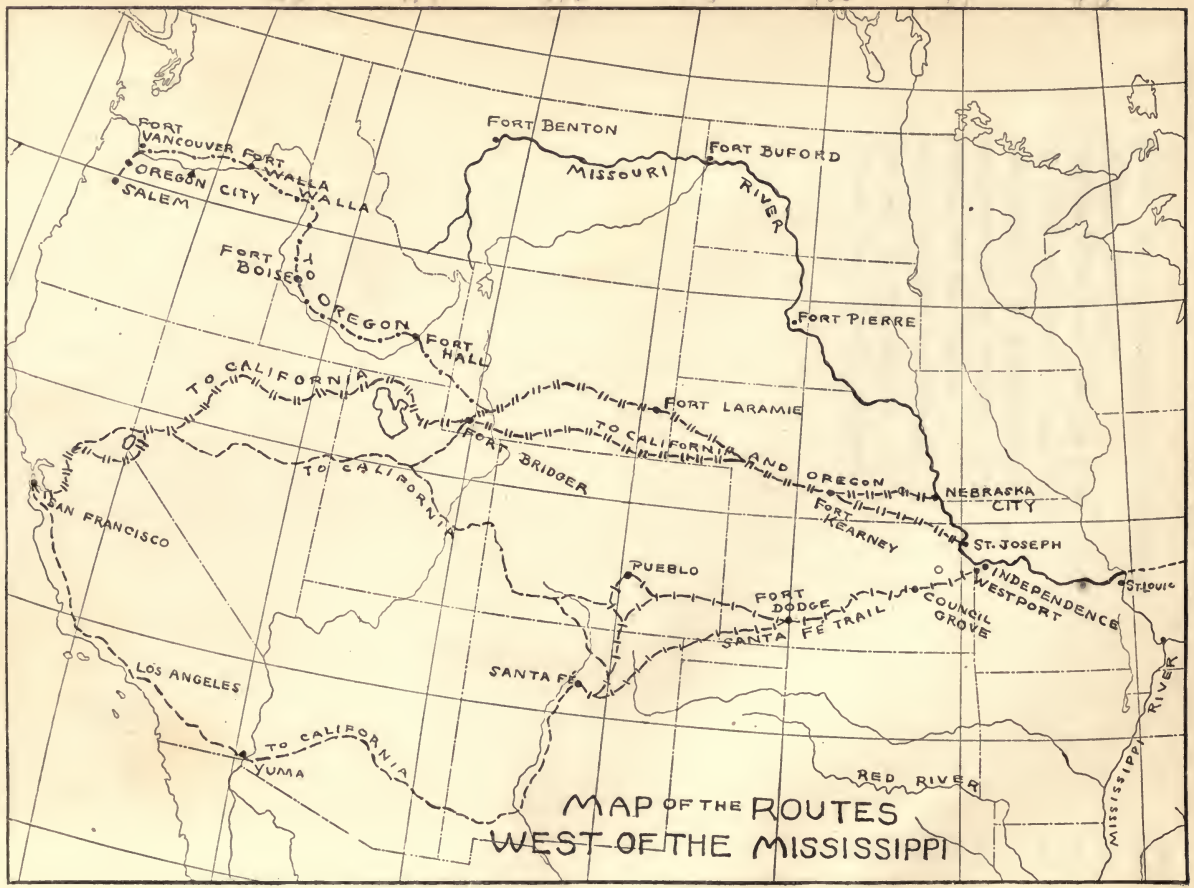
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OREGON CITY
SALEM
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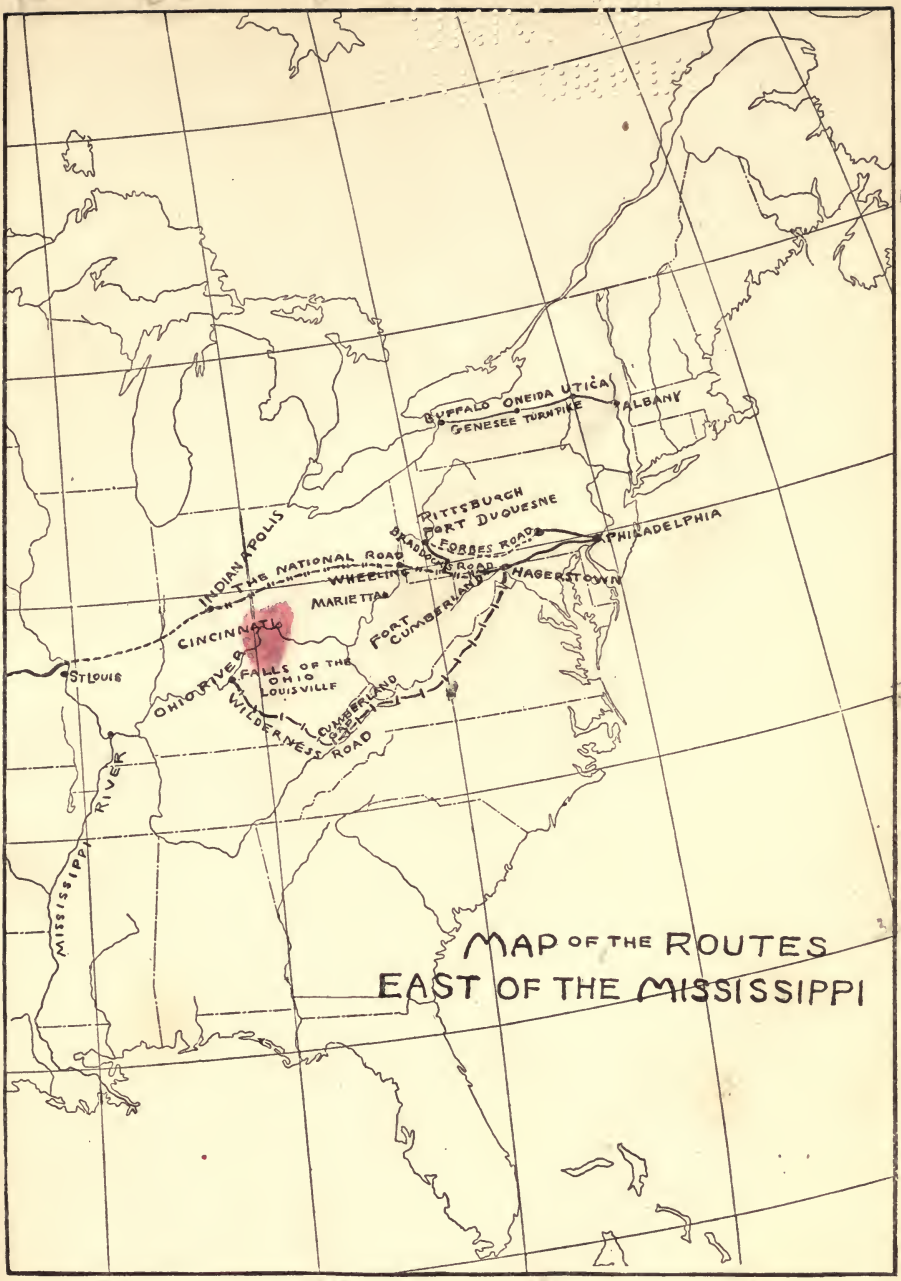


MAP OF THE ROUTES
EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI

H. F. Martino, Del.

"I . . . think I hear
The sound of that advancing multitude
Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
Of Sabbath worshippers. The low of herds
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
Over the dark brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
And I am in the wilderness alone."

—*William Cullen Bryant.*

CHAPTER ONE: THROUGH CUMBERLAND GAP TO KENTUCKY AND TENNESSEE

PIONEERS! O PIONEERS!

All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer, mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We detachments steady throwing
Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountain steep,
Conquering, holding, daring, venturing as we go the unknown ways,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We primeval forests felling,
We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the mines within,
We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheaving,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

—WALT WHITMAN.

PREPARING THE WAY

Fair elbow-room for men to thrive in!
Wide elbow-room for work or play!
If cities follow, racing our footsteps,
Ever to westward shall point our way!
Rude though our life, it suits our spirit,
And new-born States in future years
Shall own us founders of a nation,
And bless the hardy pioneers.

—Charles Mackay.

THERE is nothing more romantic in the story of the development of the United States than the records of the opening up of the great country between the western boundaries of North Carolina and Virginia and the Mississippi river. Inspiring tales of the adventures of daring explorers and picturesque stories of the struggles and triumphs of hardy emigrants clamor for the attention of those who delve into the early history of Kentucky and Tennessee. Yet the pioneers from whose journals and letters most of these narratives are gleaned, told them in such a matter-of-fact manner that sometimes more than one reading is necessary to appreciate the magnificent meaning of what to them was a commonplace story. The pioneers had been trained in such a hard school that they did not falter in the face of obstacles which, to the average man of to-day, would seem overwhelming. They had heard from their fathers and grandfathers of the conquest of the wilderness near the Atlantic seaboard, and they cast eager eyes to the region beyond the mountains whose mysteries they longed to explore, in whose fastnesses they dreamed of carving out a home.

The first men to respond to the appeal of the unknown

lived in Virginia and North Carolina. At a time when New York had made little growth westward, when in Pennsylvania there was yet much land to be possessed east of the Alleghenies, the sturdy men of the Old Dominion and their neighbors to the south of them were groaning under the necessity of obeying the proclamation of King George, made in 1763, forbidding surveys or patents of land located beyond the headwaters of streams running to the Atlantic. It was his thought that the surest way of retaining the good will of the Indians beyond the mountains was to leave them in undisturbed possession of their hunting grounds.

The Virginians and the Carolinians thought that the king's stand was too cautious; they were sure they could make such treaties with the Indians that peaceful emigration would be possible and desirable. But they held themselves in check until 1768, when some of them joined with representatives of colonies farther north in making the treaty of Fort Stanwix with the Iroquois by which the Indians yielded their rights to the region that corresponds, roughly, to the present state of Kentucky.

Little time was lost in taking advantage of this treaty, which, it was felt, annulled the restrictive proclamation of the king, so far as these lands were concerned. In 1769 a few emigrants found their way down the valley between the Blue Ridge and the Allegheny mountains and into the interior wilderness. To Joseph Martin and his companions belongs the distinction of being the first of the vast company of emigrants that made homes in the hunting grounds of the Indians. Their settlement was made in Powell's Valley, between the Cumberland and Powell mountains.

Some of this venturesome advance guard soon paid the price so often exacted of the pioneer; Indians fell on the camp and made known their anger because of the settlers' failure to observe the pledge of the king as to settlements in their domain. These Indians were Cherokees, who refused to recognize the Fort Stanwix treaty because they claimed a portion of the lands ceded by the Iroquois.

This last hindrance to settlement was removed on October 18, 1770, when Virginia made a treaty with the Cherokees, gaining their recognition of the right of emigrants to settle in the region in dispute.

The year before this treaty was made, Daniel Boone, the most picturesque character of pioneer days in Kentucky, was one of a company of six who made an exploring expedition into the new land.

This was not Boone's first experience of the Kentucky wilderness, however. His interest in the region dated from his meeting with John Finley, when the two men were on their way with Braddock to Fort Du Quesne. Finley told Boone of his hunting experiences in the lands south of the Ohio. His tales of Kentucky fired Boone's imagination, and the two men planned to go there as soon as the trip to Fort Du Quesne was ended. Finley explained how easy it would be to travel from North Carolina to Kentucky along an Indian trail that led to Cumberland Gap, and then into the desired land.

But it was not until 1760 that Boone was able to go to what is now western Tennessee. Here, on the banks of what is known as Boone's Creek, there stood until a few years ago a beech tree on whose bark was the inscription, evidently cut by the hunting knife of the pioneer, "D Boon cilled a bar on this tree in the year 1760."

The trip of 1769 was made in company with John Finley, according to the program mapped out years before. The journey of the six men who made up the party was completed in safety. Then one day the men were taken captive by the Indians, and their camp was plundered of a large store of furs, provisions and ammunition. Their horses also were taken. Before the hunters were released they were warned to keep away from the Indians' land on pain of death.

Boone and his brother-in-law stole back into the Indians' camp and secured four horses, but they were pursued and captured. Seven days later the two men managed to escape

while their captors were asleep. A little later they overtook their companions, who had turned homeward.

In the meantime Squire Boone, Daniel's brother, had come from Virginia, according to previous arrangement, with fresh horses, provisions and ammunition. Daniel at once proposed to take this new equipment and return to Kentucky. Several of the company volunteered to go with him, but others decided to go back across the mountains.

Boone and his companions continued their explorations and their hunting until one of the four was killed by Indians, and another left for North Carolina. When provisions were low Squire Boone took the furs they had gathered and returned home, while Daniel pushed on as far as the Falls of the Ohio, at the present site of Louisville. He hoped to find a place to take his family.

But before Boone was able to return with his family to Kentucky other settlers, attracted by the stories told by him, pushed on across the mountains. The character of the reports that enticed them may be judged by this extract from Boone's autobiography, which, while it must have been edited vigorously, is clearly a true representation of the Kentucky hunter's enthusiastic utterances:

We found every where abundance of wild beasts of all sorts, through this vast forest. The buffalo were more frequent than I have ever seen cattle in the settlements, browsing on the leaves of the cane, or cropping the herbage on those extensive plains, fearless, because ignorant of the violence of man. Nature was here a series of wonders and a fund of delight. Here she displayed her ingenuity and industry in a variety of flowers and fruits, beautifully colored, elegantly shaped and charmingly flavored; and we were diverted with innumerable animals presenting themselves perpetually to our view.

At another point he wrote:

Just at the close of day the gentle gales retired . . . not a breeze shook the most tremulous leaf. I had gained the

summit of a commanding ridge, and, looking around with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beauteous tract below. On the other hand I surveyed the famous Ohio that rolled in silent dignity. . . . At a vast distance I beheld the mountains lift their venerable brows and penetrate the clouds.

The objection has been made that it would be difficult to see the Ohio and the mountains at the same time, but probably Boone allowed himself a poet's license when he made some of his descriptions!

One of those who were lured by such reports was Jacob Brown, who, in 1771, settled on the Nolichucky, a branch of the Holston. The same year James Robertson took sixteen families to the Watauga, another branch of the Holston. In 1772 Robertson was instrumental in combining the settlers of the Watauga, Carter's, and the Nolichucky valleys, into the Watauga Association, organized for self-government, with written articles of agreement. In 1776 the association asked to be taken under the care of North Carolina, as the District of Washington.

Their hopes of benefits to be received from North Carolina were not realized, and in 1784 the people organized a government of their own. In 1785 they asked Congress for permission to set up an independent state, covering a large part of Kentucky.

Greenville was selected as a capital, and an assembly met there in a log cabin. The delegates, representing, it is thought, about twenty-five thousand people, chose a governor, made arrangements for a currency of fox and mink skins, and decided to ask Congress for recognition as a state. Benjamin Franklin was asked if they might adopt his name. Congress considered this a secession of a part of the parent state, and the petition for recognition was not granted.

There followed a period when the little would-be commonwealth was torn by factions, but it did not come to

its disappointing end until it had continued for a number of years to be a little republic beyond the mountains and had paved the way for the greater commonwealth that was to receive the recognition of the United States.

Two years after the settlement on the Nolichucky of Jacob Brown, which became a part of the sturdy Watauga Association, Daniel Boone made a further attempt to enter Kentucky. Of this he wrote as follows:

I sold my farm on the Yadkin and what goods we could not carry with us, and on the twenty-fifth day of September, 1773, bade a farewell to our friends and proceeded on our journey to Kentucky, in company with five families more, and forty men that joined us in Powell's Valley, which is one hundred and fifty miles from the now settled parts of Kentucky. The promising beginning was soon overcast with a cloud of adversity, for on the tenth day of October the rear of our company was attacked by a number of Indians, who killed six, and wounded one more. Of these my eldest son was one that fell in the action. Though we defended ourselves, and repulsed the enemy, yet this unhappy affair scattered our cattle, brought us into extereme difficulty, and so discouraged the whole company that we retreated to settlements on the Clinch river.

Boone, chafing at the inaction, welcomed the call of the governor of Virginia for two good woodsmen who would dash into Kentucky by the Cumberland Gap route, to warn several surveying parties to be on their guard against Indians who were rising to prevent the passage of settlers to the West. In company with Michael Stoner he penetrated far into Kentucky in July, 1774. Two months later the men returned, having done their work.

Boone's next great opportunity came when, on March 17, 1775, at Sycamore Shoals, on the Watauga, Colonel Richard Henderson and a number of friends from North Carolina made a treaty with the Cherokees for the possession of the lands bounded by the Kentucky, Holston, Cumberland

and Ohio rivers. Merchandise valued at ten thousand pounds was exchanged for eighteen million acres of land.

Steps were taken at once to make easier the settlement of the country thus secured, which Colonel Henderson and his companions called Transylvania. The pioneers realized the truth of the words spoken to Boone by a chief of the Cherokees, "Brother, we have given you a fair land, but I believe you will have much trouble in settling it."

No time was lost by the new owners of Transylvania in giving to Boone the commission to open a road for the emigrants who would be attracted to the country. Boone accepted the tremendous commission with no more anxiety than a carpenter would show over an order to build a wooden sidewalk. He knew the ways the buffaloes took in their migration, and he had followed the paths of the Indians. Equipped with this knowledge and his own unerring instinct, and accompanied by thirty hardy companions, he made a way back to Cumberland Gap, then on through the wilderness. The men cut the trees, they burned the undergrowth, and they fought the Indians as they went.

From the Gap the road led along the Warriors' Path, a mere trace used by the Indians in their journeys from their towns on the Ohio and the Scioto to their hunting grounds in the South. After following this path for some fifty miles, the roadmakers turned to the left and went on along a buffalo trace. At length they reached their goal, on the Kentucky river, and began the erection of a group of cabins for the accommodation of the settlers who were to come later under Henderson's leadership.

An admirer who, in 1916, went over the route taken by Boone, said in appreciation of him:

> He took his life in his hands and literally laid it at the feet of his fellows. Boone dared the frowning menace of great Pinnacle Rock, the most forbidding, somber mass of rock east of the Rockies; he forded the treacherous Rockcastle, all the while in danger of attacks from the red-

skinned allies of England, and westward by hard-won miles until at last he made the wonderful, fertile blue-grass lands more accessible to the emigrant.

A Kentucky historian says of the achievement:

The road marked out was at best but a trace. No vehicle of any sort passed over it before it was made a wagon road by action of the state legislature in 1795. The location of the road, however, is a monument to the skill of Boone as a practical engineer and surveyor. It required a mind of far more than ordinary caliber to locate through more than two hundred miles of mountain wilderness a way of travel which, for a hundred years, has remained practically unchanged, and upon which the state has stamped its approval by the expenditure of vast sums of money.

The following year Colonel Henderson and Richard Logan, with many others, went along the Wilderness Road and saw for themselves what good work Boone had done. After the party had passed Cumberland Gap, Henderson and Logan had a disagreement, and there separated. Henderson went on with his followers to Boonesborough, while Logan turned to the left to the Crab Orchard and on to the site of what is now Danville, on the road to the Falls of the Ohio. He was not cutting a new road, however, for Boone had gone this way in 1773, when he went to the Ohio for the governor of Virginia after his family party had been halted by the attack of the Indians.

Before long, representatives of three other settlements in the Transylvania territory gathered at Boonesborough and formed a House of Delegates for the government of the new colony. Laws were made, and the future of the Company looked bright. It was even thought that Transylvania might be admitted as the fourteenth colony in the Revolutionary Union. But the opposition of Virginia and North Carolina, which claimed the land bought from the Cherokees by the Company, the reluctance of Congress to sanction the pretensions of the Company, and internal dissen-

sions among the immigrants who found fault with what they called the avarice of Henderson and his associates, wrecked the company.

While the vain attempt to secure Congressional action was being made, George Rogers Clark, who conducted the brilliant campaign of 1777 against Kaskaskia and Vincennes, was serving as a surveyor for the Ohio Company. He had not been in Kentucky long when he felt that something should be done about the Transylvania Company's claim. Emigrants who were coming into the country by way of the Ohio were perplexed to know to whom the lands to the south of the Kentucky river belonged. Had they a real right to the country, or did Virginia intend to exercise control over the region? On June 6, 1776, Clark called a meeting of the citizens of Harrodsburg, to consider what should be done, and was appointed one of two delegates to the Virginia Legislature to present the matter.

The journey to Williamsburg was difficult. The season was unusually wet, the roads were muddy, and there was constant danger from Indians. After a time one of the horses was lost, and Clark walked until his feet were blistered and sore. Years later he said he suffered more torment on this trip than he had suffered before or since.

Finally the two men reached Williamsburg, rejoicing that they could soon perform their errand. But, to their dismay, they learned that the legislature had adjourned.

Clark sought an interview with the governor, Patrick Henry, and asked for a grant of five hundred pounds to buy powder for the use of the settlers in Kentucky in defending themselves against the Indians. When there was delay in furnishing the powder, he urged that "a country which is not worth defending is not worth claiming." These words proved effective, for Virginia intended to assert the right to Kentucky, against the Transylvania Company and all other claimants.

At the next session of the legislature, Clark and his associates brought about the organization of Kentucky as a

county of Virginia. Henderson's title to the lands bought from the Indians was denied, but in recognition of his services in promoting settlement and opening the Wilderness Road he was given a tract of two hundred thousand acres at the mouth of Green river.

Boone, the real hero of the Wildernes Road, became a leader in the fight to save the Kentucky settlers from the Indians, who were encouraged in their attacks by the British, the holders of the forts at St. Louis, Kaskaskia, Vincennes and Detroit. The Indians attacked the fort at Boonesborough several times in 1776 and 1777, but were repulsed.

In February, 1778, the defenders of the fort were deprived of their leader for a season. With thirty settlers Boone had gone to the lower Blue Lick to gather a supply of salt sufficient to last during a possible siege. The party was about to return to the fort when a warband of Shawnees captured Boone.

His captors took him to their camp, where he found a large party of warriors. The demand was made that he lead them to his companions. Naturally he did not wish to do this, but when he learned that the party was on the way to attack Boonesborough, he decided to comply with the demand. He understood savage nature well enough to foresee that if they had thirty captives, they would postpone their attack on the settlement until they could take their men in triumph to Detroit and secure the liberal reward offered by the British. Later he was tried by court-martial for this betrayal of his companions, but the court approved his defense that it was better that thirty men should go into captivity than that a settlement should be destroyed.

The journey to Detroit in the depth of winter proved difficult and dangerous. Intense cold and heavy snows interfered with game supplies. Finally some of the horses and dogs were killed for food. Later many were eager to kill the prisoners by torture. Fifty-nine Shawnees voted to

burn the captives at the stake, but fortunately sixty-one voted to save them for the reward.

During the journey the Indians became so fond of Boone that they told him they wished to adopt him into the tribe. In vain Governor Hamilton, the British commander at Detroit, offered one hundred pounds for Boone's release; he wished to use him as a scout. Boone was taken to the Shawnee village at Chillicothe, in Ohio, and there adopted by Chief Black Fish.

He pretended to like the life at the Indian camp, but he was only waiting for a chance to escape. The Shawnees, fearing that he might leave them, were determined that he should not secure a supply of powder and bullets; they know that he would not dare to enter the trackless forest unarmed. Careful account was kept of the ammunition furnished him when he went on hunting expeditions, and he was compelled to return all for which he could not give account. His cunning was greater than that of the Indians, for he managed to cut bullets in half and use small charges of powder when after small game. In this manner he laid by a small store of lead and powder.

When he had been a prisoner for four months, his curiosity was aroused by the coming into camp of hundreds of savages in war-paint. By this time he understood more of the Shawnee language than he was willing to own, so he had little difficulty in learning the purposes of the war party. They were planning an immediate attack on Boonesborough.

He did not hesitate an instant in making his decision. His people must be warned at once, and no one could carry the warning but himself. He knew that recapture was almost certain, yet he was willing to run the risk.

The story of the journey of one hundred and sixty miles to Boonesborough is one of the most thrilling tales of pioneer days. Early on the morning of June 16, 1778, he asked leave to spend the day in hunting. As soon as he was out of sight of camp, he turned toward Kentucky. All

his woodcraft was called into play to deceive those whom he knew would soon be on his track. He did not dare to shoot game, lest he betray his whereabouts.

At last he reached the Ohio. Unfortunately the river was in flood, and he was not a good swimmer. Discovering an old canoe, he crossed the stream. Then he renewed his precautions. He could not use his gun, for he feared to betray himself to possible pursuers. For three days he lived on roots and raw meat, but on the third day he ventured to shoot a buffalo. A day or two later he entered Boonesborough, torn and bleeding, and looking the specter the people took him for.

Two months later he led in the defense of the fort against four hundred and fifty Indians. Thus he coöperated in the saving of Kentucky with George Rogers Clark, who led the successful expedition against Kaskaskia and Vincennes.

After the Revolutionary war he moved on farther into the wilderness. Later he went to Maysville, where he opened a tavern and store. Still later, when he moved to Point Pleasant, in western Virginia, he was elected to the Virginia Assembly for the third time, having previously been a member from Boonesborough and from Maysville.

In 1796, when the Kentucky Legislature proposed to improve the Wilderness Road for wagon travel, Boone wrote to Governor Shelby:

Sir, after my best Respts to your Excellency and famyly, I wish to inform you that I have sum intention of undertaking this New Rode that is to be cut through the Wilderness, and I think my Self intitled to the ofer of the Bisness as I first Marked out that Rode in March 1775 and Never rec'd anything for my trubel and Sepose I am no Statesman I am a Woodsman and think My Self as Capable of Marking and Cutting that Rode as any other man. Sir if you think with Me I would thank you to wright me a line by the post the first oportuneaty and he Will Lodge it at Mr. John Milers on hinkston fork as I wish to know Where and

When it is to be Laat (let) So that I may atend at the time I am Deer Sir your very omble sarvent.

DANIEL BOONE

But the contract was given to others, to Boone's great disappointment.

The first scheme for the improvement of the Wilderness Road was formed in 1792. One hundred and four men who agreed that something should be done wrote their names on a subscription list which is one of the valued records of the Kentucky Historical Society. These subscriptions ranged from three shillings to three pounds.

At once many men were set to work on the road—wood cutters, surveyors, provision carriers, and corn grinders, among others. These men received two shillings and sixpence a day. The work lasted twenty-two days, and was completed in the summer of 1792.

In 1793, 1794 and 1795 the legislature passed acts for the improvement of sections of the road. In 1797 provision was made for the erection of a toll gate. Then the road took the name of "The Wilderness Turnpike," though it was never in those days a turnpike in the proper sense. To-day, when the Lincoln Highway follows it for ninety-eight miles, it has a right to the name. This stretch of the road is called, very properly, "Boone Way."

Filson, the first historian of Kentucky, in his rare volume published in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1784, gave a map of the road which he called "The Road from the Old Settlements in Virginia to Kentuckee thro' the Great Wilderness."

II. THROUGH THE GREAT WILDERNESS

Here once Boone trod—the hardy pioneer—
The only white man in the wilderness;
Oh, how he loved alone to hunt the deer,
Alone at eve his simple meal to dress;
No mark upon the tree, nor print nor track,
To lead him forward or to guide him back;
He roved the forest, king by main and might,
And looked up to the sky and shaped his course aright.
—Frederick W. Thomas.

Over the famous Wilderness Road the emigrants found their way by scores and by hundreds, during the Revolution, and after the war was over their numbers became greater than ever. Imlay, an early traveler, said in the volume he wrote about America: "I have seen upwards of ten thousand emigrants to arrive in the single state of Kentucky within a year, and from four to ten thousand in several other years. A large proportion of these Kentucky emigrants went by Boone road, as well as the emigrants to Tennessee."

Following this route to Tennessee, James Robertson, who had been prominent in the organization of the Watauga Association, went, in 1779, with his son to the head of the Cumberland and made a new settlement which he called Nashborough, later Nashville. A few months later Colonel Donelson, accompanied by several hundred men, women and children, went in thirty boats down the Tennessee, up the Ohio and up the Cumberland, to Robertson's settlement. One of those in the party later became the wife of Andrew Jackson. Soon after his arrival at Nashborough, Donelson and Robertson joined others in forming an association for self-government, similar to the Watauga Asso-

ciation, of which there were two hundred and fifty-six members.

Imlay, who wrote in 1793 concerning the Wilderness Road and Kentucky,[1] * told of the sources of the emigration to the new country:

Emigration to this country was mostly from the back parts of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and North Carolina, until 1784; in which year many officers who had served in the American army during the late war came out with their families; several families came also from England, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, York, and the New England States. The country soon began to be chequered after that æra with genteel men, which operated both upon the minds and actions of the back woods people, who constituted the first emigrants.

A suggestive record [2] tells of a company of the early emigrants, made up of five men and their families. There was one horse in the equipment of the party that "was compelled to carry on his back what, with much more ease and convenience to himself and owner, can now be conveyed by means of wagons, but the latter could not be used on the trace at that time."

That a horse under such circumstances might carry the maximum load,

the first thing to be done was to apply to a pack-saddle maker. . . . The pack saddles being procured, the horse was loaded with such articles of household furniture and utensils as were needful for the journey and for making the necessary improvements in the new country. . . . The feather beds were snugly rolled up, each one by itself. Two of these were fastened together by ropes and placed lengthwise on the horse, one on each side; forming something like a cradle immediately over the horse's back, affording quite a convenient place in which to deposit the smaller children.

* Notes will be found in a group at the close of each chapter.

Another mode of conveying the little ones was by swinging across a gentle pack horse two large and properly constructed baskets, in each of which were placed a pair of children, of a size and weight to form a proper balance. . . . Some care was, however, necessary to guard the animals thus loaded from coming in contact with the nests of yellow jackets, which were numerous along the trace in the fall of the year. In occasionally coming in contact with those nests, the horse would sometimes relieve himself of a part or the whole of his load, in the exertions to get rid of these tormenting insects.

A description [3] of the pack saddle of the pioneer gives an even better idea of the necessary bit of equipment. It was

a rude contrivance made of the forked branch of a tree in keeping with the primitive simplicity of the times. When fastened upon a horse it became the receptacle of the goods and chattels to be transported. Thus were carried provisions for the journey and the household stuff and utensils needed to make life tolerable when the journey was ended and the place of residence selected.

The pack had to have a particular shape and the branch of a tree which could be made into a saddle was an attractive object. It is related that an early preacher once paused in his Sunday service with his eyes fixed on the top of a tree. He said: "I want to remark right here, that yonder is one of the best forks for a pack saddle I ever saw in the woods. When services are over we will get it."

F. A. Michaux,[4] another early traveler, told how the users of these pack saddles got together:

Those who emigrated . . . went to Block House, situated in Holston, westward of the mountains, and as the government of the United States did not furnish them with an escort, they waited at this place till they were sufficiently numerous to pass in safety through the wilderness, an uninhabited space of a hundred and thirty miles, which they

had to travel over before they arrived at Crab Orchard, the first post occupied by whites.

East bound travelers on the road adopted the same precautions. When a man wished to go to Virginia or eastern Kentucky he would watch for an advertisement in one of the papers of the pioneers giving a message like this, which appeared in the *Kentucky Gazette* of April 12, 1788:

Notice is hereby given that a company will meet at the Crab Orchard on Sunday the 4th day of May, to go through the wilderness, and to set out on the 5th, at which time most of the Delegates to the State Convention will go.

On May 3, 1788, the same paper announced:

A large company will meet at the Crab Orchard on Sunday, the 25th of May, in order to make an early start on Monday, the 26th, through the wilderness for the old settlement.

On November 1, 1788, the readers of the *Gazette* found this notice:

A large company will meet at the Crab Orchard the 19th of November in order to start the next day through the wilderness. As it is very dangerous on account of the Indians, it is hoped each person will go well armed.

In an anniversary address[5] Chief Justice Robertson of Kentucky gave what he called an imperfect description of the pilgrimage of his own father and mother:

An unexampled tide of emigrants, who, exchanging all the comforts of their native society and homes for settlements for themselves and their children here, came like pilgrims to a wilderness to be made secure by their arms and habitable by the toil of their lives. Through privations incredible and perils thick, thousands of men, women and children came in successive caravans, forming continuous streams of human beings, horses, cattle, and other domestic animals, all moving onward along a lonely and houseless

path to a wild and cheerless land. Cast your eyes back on that long procession of missionaries in the cause of civilization, behold the men on foot with their trusty guns on their shoulders, driving stock and loading pack horses; and the women, some walking with pails on their heads, others riding with children in their laps, and other children swung in baskets on horses, fastened to the tails of others going before; see them encamped at night expecting to be massacred by Indians; behold them in the month of December, in that ever memorable season of unprecedented cold called "the hard winter," traveling two or three miles a day, frequently in danger of being frozen or killed by the falling of horses on the icy and almost impassable trace, and subsisting on stinted allowances of stale bread and meat; but now lastly, look at them, at the destined fort, perhaps on the eve of merry Christmas, when met by the hearty welcome of friends who had gone before, and cheered by fresh buffalo meat and parched corn, they rejoice at their deliverance and resolve to be contented with their lot.

The demand for Kentucky lands was increased by the action of Virginia in 1781, in setting aside millions of acres in the territory as bounties for revolutionary soldiers. In 1782 there were twelve thousand people in Kentucky, and in 1784 the number had increased to thirty thousand. In 1790 the territory had a population of over ninety-three thousand.

"The enthusiasm for emigrating was at that time carried to such a degree that some years upwards of twenty thousand have been known to pass," a visiting foreigner wrote in amazement. "The overflow of new colonies very soon raised the price of land in Kentucky; from twopence and twopence half penny per acre, it suddenly rose to seven or eight shillings."

In 1793 Imlay said,[6] in connection with a map drawn by him for insertion in his volume of travels:

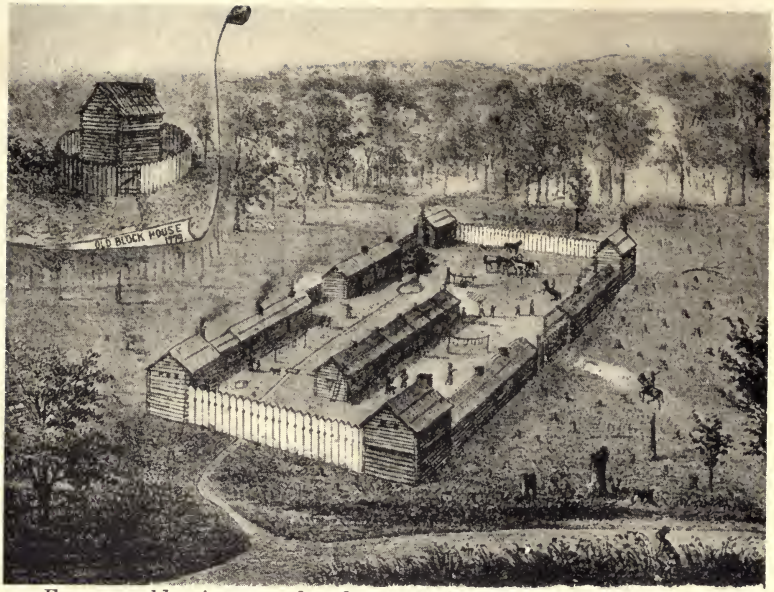
You will discern that Kentucky is already divided into nine counties, and that villages are springing up in every

From an old print

ON THE ROAD IN EARLY DAYS

From "National Gallery of American Landscape"

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA, IN EARLY DAYS



From an old print reproduced in "The Magazine of American History"

THE OLD FORT AT LEXINGTON, BUILT IN 1782

From "Picturesque America"

CUMBERLAND GAP, TENNESSEE

part within its limits, while roads have been opened to shorten the distance to Virginia, and to smooth the rugged paths which a short time since were only tracts of communication from one place to another.

In 1800 the population of Kentucky was two hundred and twenty thousand, or more than there were in Connecticut at that time.

Imlay's table of stations [7] and distances on the road from Philadelphia to Louisville helps one to appreciate the difficulties of the pioneers:

From Philadelphia to Lancaster	66
To Wright's on Susquehanna	10
To York-town	12
Abbott's-town	15
Hunter's-town	10
the Mountain at Black's Gap	3
the other side of the Mountain	7
the Stone-house Tavern	25
Wadkin's Ferry on Potowmack	14
Martinsburg	13
Winchester	20
New-town	8
Stover's-town	10
Woodstock	12
Shanandoah River	15
the North branch of Shanandoah	29
Staunton	15
the North Fork of James River	37
James River	18
Botetourt Court House	12
Woods on Catawba River	21
Paterson's on Roanoak	9
the Allegany Mountain	8
New River	12
the Forks of the Road	16
Fort Chissel	12
Stone Mill	11
Boyd's	8

Head of Holstein	5
Washington Court House	45
the Block-House	35
Powell's Mountain	33
Walden's Ridge	3
the Valley Station	4
Martin Cabbin's	25
Cumberland Mountain	20
the Ford of Cumberland River	13
the Flat Lick	9
Stinking Creek	2
Richland Creek	7
Down Richland Creek	8
Rackoon Spring	6
Laurel River	2
Hazle Patch	15
the Ford on Rock Castle River	10
English's Station	25
Col. Edward's at Crab Orchard	3
Whitley's Station	5
Logan's Station	5
Clark's Station	7
Crow's Station	4
Harrod's Station	3
Harlands	4
Harbison's	10
Bards-town	25
the Salt works	25
the Falls of the Ohio	20
Total	826

Rev. Peter Cartwright, the pioneer Methodist circuit rider, in giving an account of his life,[8] told of the coming of his parents to Kentucky by this route, shortly after the Revolution:

It was an almost unbroken wilderness from Virginia to Kentucky at that early day. . . . There were no roads for carriages, and though the emigrants moved by thousands,

they had to move on pack horses. The fall my father moved there were a great many families who joined together for mutual safety. Besides the two hundred families thus united there were one hundred young men, well armed, who agreed to guard these families through the wilderness. After we struck the wilderness we rarely traveled a day but we passed some white persons, murdered and scalped by the Indians.

When they were some miles from the Crab Orchard, the first white settlement recorded, seven families camped for the night. The others went on to the station. That night those left behind were killed by the Indians.

At one time a number of churches traveled in a body from Virginia to Kentucky:[9]

Such a company journeying through the wilderness was an impressive scene. The voice of their pastor can be heard encouraging them with sermons drawn from the Exodus of the Israelites. While they enjoyed the good fortune of fair weather, sunshine and immunity from Indian molestation, we can hear their cheerful voices in happy conversation. . . . But when the clouds lowered and rain, sleet and snow were driven against them by the bleak mountain winds, we can see the distress of the women, and hear the pitiful cry of the little ones. If, to the dismal wretchedness of rough, wild country and stormy weather, were added the horrors of an Indian attack, the picture of helpless distress is complete.

One emigrant company of five families had with them twenty or more horses and some fifty head of cattle, including a few cows to provide milk for the children.[10] Each day when the party would set out, the cattle were driven in advance by two or three men or boys. At first it was difficult to make the animals move properly, but soon they seemed to be as well accustomed to being on the move as those who drove them. The pack horses followed in single file. These were in charge of the men, who walked along-

side on foot, each with his rifle on his shoulder. Usually the women and small children were in the rear on horseback, though sometimes a mother would lead the horse that carried her children.

All went well until the emigrants reached the middle of the wilderness. Then the cold rain fell day after day. The creeks became swollen. Finally there was frost and snow. Food became scarce, and the horses lost flesh and failed in strength. Food for the women and children became scanty. The party halted, while the hunters set out after game. The search was unsuccessful; the noise of the men in the frozen snow alarmed the animals so eagerly sought. With heavy hearts the fathers returned to their children who were crying from hunger. It became necessary to kill some of the precious cattle for food. The meat was cooked without seasoning and was eaten without bread.

Thus passed seven or eight weeks. For a time the cattle lived on the cane, (they were encamped in a canebrake), but the day came when rain froze on the cane. Deprived of the only food, all the cattle died. When it became possible to travel there were not enough horses to carry the baggage, and it was found necessary to hide some of the heavier articles in the hope that these might be recovered in the spring.

Fortunately, two hunters who went in advance of the party succeeded in killing a deer. Some of the children were so eager for food that they ate the meat half raw. Later in the day two more deer were brought in whose flesh was lean and blue.

After many weeks of privation the emigrants reached English Station. The first dried buffalo meat they had there seemed like a great delicacy.

Remaining only long enough to see their families safely housed, some of the men went back to the wilderness for the goods they had left behind.

They searched for these in vain. Later they learned that thieves had raided not only this cache but also the

caches of many other emigrant companies which had been forced to leave their goods behind during that trying winter.

Four months after the party reached English Station, two of the men were felling trees near their homes when they heard a call from the forest. Hastily they reached for their rifles, for they feared an Indian surprise. But when the call was repeated, they investigated and found a man without clothing. The unfortunate man told that while he was in the forest near Morton's Station, hunting strayed cattle, the station had been taken by the Indians and all the settlers had been killed. On his return he learned of the disaster in time to escape. When he came to the Kentucky river he made a raft, rolled his clothing in a bundle, and tried to reach the opposite shore. The raft upset, the clothes were lost in the stream, and with great difficulty he succeeded in landing. Then he wandered about until he heard the woodsmen and called to them for help.

III. THE ADVENTURES OF THREE TRAVELERS

The mountains that enclose the vale
With walls of granite, steep and high,
Invite the fearless foot to scale
Their stairway toward the sky.

. . . .

The bars of life at which we fret
That seem to prison and control,
Are but the doors of daring, set
Ajar before the soul.

—Henry Van Dyke.

WILLIAM CALK went from Prince William County, Virginia, to Boonesborough, in 1775. In his journal [11] he told of the experiences of the trip, which lasted from March 13 to May 2. In part, this record was as follows:

Satrd 25th—We start early over some more very Bad mountains one that is called Clinch mountain and we git this night to Danil Smiths on Clinch and there we staid till thursday morning on tuesday night and wednesday morning it snowed Very hard and was very Coald and we hunted a good deal there While we staid in Rough mountains and kild three deer and one turkey Eanock Abram and I got lost tuesday night and it a snowing and Should a lain in the Mountains had not I a had a pocket compas by which I got in a littel in the night and fired guns and they heard them and came in By the Repoart.

thursd 30th—We set out again and went down to Elk garden and there suplied our Selves With Seed Corn and irish tators then we went on a littel way I turned my hors to drive before me and he got scard ran away threw Down the Saddel Bags and brok three of our powder goards and Abrams beast Burst open a Walet of corn and lost a good Deal and made a turrabel flustration amongst the Reast of

the Horses Drakes mair run aganst a sapling and noct it down we cacht them all agin and went on and lodged at John Duncans.

frdy 31st—We suplyed our Selves at Dunkans with a 103 pounds of Bacon and went on again to Brileys mill and suployed our Selves with meal and lodged this night on Clinch By a large cainbraike and cuckt our Suppers.

April Saturdy 1st—This morning there is ice at our camp half inch thick we start early and travel this Day along a verey Bad hilley way cross one creek whear the horses almost got mired some fell in and all wet their loads wair we cross Clinch River and travell till late in the Night and camp on Cove creek. having two men with us that wair pilates . . .

frday 7th—this morning is a very bad snowy morning, we still continue at Camp being in number about 40 men and some neagros this Eaven Comes a letter from Capt. Boone at caintuck of the indians doing mischief and some turns back.

Saturdy 8th—We all pack up and started crost Cumberland gap about one o'clock this Day Met a good maney peopel turned Back for fear of the indians but our Company goes on Still with good courage we come to a very ugly Creek with steep Banks and have to cross several times on this Creek we camp this night.

Sunday 9th—this morning we wait at camp for the cattel to Be drove up to kill a Beef tis late before they come and people make out a littel snack and agree to go on till night we git to Cumberland River and there we camp meet more men turn Back. . . .

tuesday 11th . . . We cross Cumberland River and travel Down it about 10 miles through some turrabel cainbrakes as we went down abrams mair Ran into the River with her load and swam over he followed her and got on her and made her swim back agin it is a very raney Eavening we take up Camp near Richland Creek they kill a beef Mr. Drake Bakes Bread without washing his hands we Keep Sentry this Night for fear of the indians.

Wednesday 12th—this is a Raney morning But we pack up and go on we come to Richland Creek it is high we tote

our packs over on a tree and swim our horses over and there we meet another Companey going Back they tell such News Abram and Drake is Afraid to go aney further there we camp this night.

thursday 13th . . . Abram and Drake turn Back we go on and git to loral River we come to a creek Before wheare we are able to unload and to take our packs over on a log this day we met about 20 men turning Back We are obliged to take our packs over loral river and swim our horses and one hors ran in with his pack and lost it in the river and they got it agin. . . .

Sunday 16th—cloudy and warm we start early and go on about 2 miles down the river and then turn up a creek that we crost about 50 times some very bad foards with a great Deal of very good land on it in the Eavening we git over on to the waters of Caintuck and go a little down the creek and there we camp keep sentel the fore part of the Night it rains very har all night. . . .

tusdy 18th—Air fin and cool and we go about 10 oclock we meet 4 men from Boons camp that caim to conduck us on we camp this night just on the Beginning of the good land near the Blue lick they Kill 2 bofelos this Eavening.

thursdy 20th—We start early and git Down to caintuck to Boons foart about 12 oclock where we stop they come out to meet us and welcom us in with a voley of guns.

friday 21st— . . . they begin laying off lots in the town and preparing for people to go to work to make corn.

Satterdy 22nd—they finish laying out lots this Eavening I went a fishing and caught 3 cats they meet in the night to draw for chose of lots but prefer it till morning.

Sundy 23rd—this morning the peopel meets and draws for chois of lots . . .

mondy 24th—We all view our lots and some Dont like them . . .

tusdy 25th—in the eaving we git on a plain at the mouth of the creek and begin clearing.

Wednesday 26th—We Begin Building us a house and a plaise of Defense to Keep the indians off this day we begin to live without bread.

thursdy 27th—Raniey all Day But We Still keep about our house.

Satterdy 29th—We git our house Kivered with Bark and mov our things into it at Night and Begin housekeeping Eanock Smith Robert Whitledge and myself.

William Brown, an emigrant of 1782, told of his experiences:[12]

Set out from Hanover [Virginia] Monday, 27th May, 1782 . . . Crossing the Blue Ridge is not bad . . . Neither is the Alleghany Mountain by any means difficult at this gap. . . . We waited hereabouts near two weeks for company, and then set out for the wilderness with twelve men and ten guns, this being Thursday, 18th July. The road from this until you get over Walten's Ridge generally is bad, some part very much so. . . . It will be but a thin settled country whenever it is settled. The fords of Holstein and Clinch are both good in dry weather, but in a rainy season you are often obliged to raft over. . . . For about fifty miles as you travel along the valley, Cumberland Mountain appears to be a very high ridge of white rocks, inaccessible in most places to either man or beast and affords a wild romantic prospect. The way through the gap is not very difficult, but from its situation travelers may be attacked in some places, crossing the mountain, by the enemy to a very great disadvantage. From thence until you pass Rockcastle River there is very little good road; this tract of country is very mountainous, and badly watered along the trace, especially for springs. There is some good land on the water courses, and just on this side Cumberland River appears to be a good tract, and within a few years I expect to have a settlement on it. . . . Monday, 29th inst, I got to Harrodsburg.

In March, 1778, Daniel Trabue, a young man of twenty-one, set out from his Virginia home to join Colonel George Rogers Clark in Kentucky on the expedition authorized by the Virginia legislature which resulted in the conquest of Cahokia and Vincennes. In the party were seven men, in-

cluding James Trabue, Daniel's brother, and a negro boy. Only a small supply of provisions was taken; the dependence of the men was on game they thought they would kill. The journey was made by way of Cumberland Gap, where the first adventure was staged.

The sight of fresh Indian tracks brought the little party to a stand. The diary kept by Daniel Trabue[13] tells what happened:

James Trabue ordered everyone to alight, and prime our guns afresh, and put 2 bullets in each man's mouth, and if we came up with the Indians, we must fight our best. . . . We had one man with us that was named Locust; he said he wished he could come up with the Indians; he wanted so bad to have a chance of killing them; he said he could kill five himself; he could shoot, he could tomahawk, and make use of his butcher's knife.

The pursuit continued. "I was getting very afraid that we would be defeated," the honest Trabue wrote. "As we went on I talked some with Locust; again he talked the same way of killing, and I began to feel chicken-hearted. I was afraid I would be killed in this dreary howling wilderness.

"I thought if I came in contact with the Indians I would go behind a tree, or in the rear, but I thought that would not do, as I might be called a coward."

Suddenly two Indians were seen, sitting in the road, eating. They sprang to their feet and fled. Daniel was among the lustiest of the pursuers. After a time, seeing that the pursuit would be vain, James Trabue called a halt. Then the men praised Daniel for his bravery.

The boastful Locust was not in sight. Had he refused to give up the pursuit, but the negro boy explained the absence of the brave Indian fighter who longed to face five Indians alone. He had relieved the negro of the care of the horses, and had remained safely in the rear!

More than three years later, while William Trabue was

in the same general region, with ten or twelve armed men, the party overtook a number of families moving to Kentucky who begged the men to join their company, for added protection.[14]

When near Cumberland Gap Daniel Trabue and two other men went bear hunting; the large party was in need of meat. Bear tracks were soon discovered on a lofty ridge, and the pursuit of the animal was begun.

We turned to the right to go down the ridge. There was a Gap between two lofty rocks. We went through the gap and down a few steps, and we were on a bench 10 or 12 feet wide, and there was a shelving rock from the ridge which mostly covered this bench. . . . In the front of this bench, as we would look down the mountain from where we stood, it appeared to be Impossible to go further as it was about 25 feet Down to the next bench perpendicular. We said "Here is a jumping off place; it is good and dry where we stand, but what will we Do if the Indians come on us here?" We all concluded that it would kill any man who would jump down; that if the Indians did come we could keep off 20 by shooting them as they would approach; the bench that we were on was about 20 yards long.

A fire was built on the bench. As the men stood before the fire a stick cracked at the gap behind them. Trabue stooped down to get his gun, and saw the Indians in the gap. The men turned to defend themselves when a startling sound from behind made them turn. Other Indians were coming through the gap at the other end of the bench.

The situation was critical. There was no escape from the bench, save through the gap where the Indians were, and down the precipice which had made the men shudder as they looked at it only a few minutes before.

But not many seconds were given to decide what to do. From both sides the Indians rushed in, brandishing their tomahawks. With one accord the men leaped over the edge of the bench, to what they thought might be their

death, but to their surprise they lighted on another scanty bench of soft earth about two feet wide. From this they slipped to the next bench. By this time they were out of sight of the Indians. Other benches were taken rapidly and before long the bear hunters were down the mountain. The sound of pursuit could be heard, but the Indians were following a safe track and there was hope.

Trabue kicked off his shoes because they were wet as well as too big. A moment later, thinking of the silver buckles that were worth six dollars, he turned back to pick them up. As he stooped to recover the shoes he saw the Indians, one of whom fired at him from a distance of a hundred yards. "I felt bad," he owned in his story of the day.

Finally, after a stern chase, the Indians gave up, but not until the bear hunters were within sight of their camp.

As they talked over the events of the afternoon they wondered how they could have escaped from twelve or fifteen Indians. They decided that the savages had no notion that the white men would jump down from the bench, and that their guns must have been wet.

"The next day neither of us could scarcely walk," the stirring tale concludes. "Our friends had to bring up our horses to us, for us to get on them."

Daniel Trabue made a second journey to Kentucky in the spring of 1785. Of this he wrote:[15]

Early in the spring of 1785 we concluded to move to Kentucky. About the last of March Brother James Trabue and I, with a negro man and a few Virginians, set out to come through the wilderness.

When we reached the frontier we heard that the Indians were very troublesome. But few people were using the Wilderness Road, so the old Virginians turned back home. My Brother and I, and the negro, went on to Powell's Valley, and Tarryed several Days waiting for company. Captain Thomas Gert from Kentucky, Mr. Bramlett from Bedford County, Va., a Frenchman and one more concluded to

join us, so we set out and traveled over the most dangerous places in the night.

We got to Cumberland Gap about dark expecting by Daylight to reach the big Lake, which is about 20 miles away. We thought we would then take to the woods, or that even if we kept the Trail, we would not be in so much danger, after we had passed the big lake. But on account of bad mud holes, slippery banks, cane brakes, and some logs across the road, darkness overtook us much sooner than we wished, and we could not leave the Trail in that section of the country. We went on briskly, and bravely until we got past the big lick where the Indian War road leaves the Kentucky road.

We stopped and fed our horses on the grass, ate our supper, and went on again. That evening we met a large company of about a hundred men from Kentucky, who told us there were plenty of signs of Indians ahead. We thought that the Indians would try to surprise either us or the larger company that night. We let our fire go out, and one of us kept awake, but Brother James and I concluded we were now out of danger, but it was best to look sharp.

Brother James and I generally went a little ahead. I was now in advance, when suddenly, I saw an Indian ahead 100 yards, by a tree, behind which he dodged. As we passed, he then ran off apparently scared. Mr. Bramlett said, "Let us take after him and kill him," but James Trabue said "He is not there by himself. Indians do not go to War 300 miles unless they are prepared for it. Furthermore if we stay here another minute we will see plenty of them." "What shall we do?" said Capt. Gert who was an old Indian fighter. "Dart off into the woods with all our might," said James Trabue, which we did, James going ahead.

We kept to the woods nearly all day, and saw plenty of signs showing that a large quantity of Indians were in that section of the country; we felt very wild and skittish. . . . We thought it was probable that we might come across some straggling parties of Indians hunting, and we concluded to kill them if we could. . . . Just before night we came to the road near Rockcastle; we kept to the road, and had to go up Scrags' Creek, crossing it many times.

Darkness overtook us, and as it was cloudy it seemed to me the darkest night I ever saw. As we all thought that we were in imminent danger, we concluded to travel during the night, and to keep on to a station at Crab Orchard. As we went on the Frenchman's horse fell with him several feet down an embankment. We were a long time trying to get him out, and finally were compelled to make a light to do so. We now concluded to stop, and turn our horses out, but hoppled them. Some of us kept awake while others slept.

I for one did not sleep any, as the horses were alarmed at something that we apprehended was Indians. I waked up the men, and told them it was not so dark as it had been, and since the horses were alarmed at something we had best start. To this they all consented. We reached Crab Orchard about 9 o'clock in the morning, ordered breakfast and our horses fed. I went into the house almost asleep; laid by my saddle bags and gun and went to bed. That afternoon Bro. James, and I, and my negro, went to Gilbert's Creek, where G. S. Smith lived, and from there to Woodford, where I intended to live.

My brother James went back to Virginia and left me. I made some arrangements for the reception of my family, and in July set out for home again. When we went through the wilderness this time, we had one hundred men in the company, and they voted me as their Captain. We kept out strong sentries each night, and getting through the wilderness safely and well, I soon got back to Chesterfield, to my family, and made arrangements to move to Kentucky by way of Fort Pitt.

Only seventeen years after this adventurous journey, Kentucky became a state in the Union, and the pioneers rejoiced.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

(See Bibliography)

1. "Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America," p. 153.
2. "Pioneer Biography," Vol. I, p. 182.
3. "Description, Settlement and Present State of Kentucky."
4. "Travels to the West of the Allegheny Mountains," p. 159.
5. "The Wilderness Road" (Filson Club), p. 41.

6. "Topographical Description of the Western Territory of North America," p. 397.
7. Ditto.
8. "Autobiography of Peter Cartwright," p. 2.
9. "The Wilderness Road" (Filson Club), p. 39.
10. Ditto, p. 34.
11. Ditto, p. 57.
12. Ditto, p. 14.
13. "Colonial Men and Times," p. 14.
14. Ditto, p. 70.
15. Ditto, p. 120.

CHAPTER TWO: THROUGH THE PITTSBURGH AND WHEELING GATEWAYS

CROSSING THE ALLEGHENIES

Now down the mountain's rugged western side,
Descending slow, our lowly travelers hied.
Deep in a narrow glen, within whose breast
The rolling fragments of the mountains rest;
Rocks tumbled on each other, by rude chance,
Crowned with gay fern, and mosses, meet the glance,
Through which a brawling river traced its way,
Dashing among the rocks in foaming spray.
Here, mid the fragments of a broken world,
In wild and rough confusion, idly hurled,
Where ne'er was heard the woodman's echoing stroke,
Rose a huge forest of gigantic oak,
With heads that towered half up the mountain side,
And arms extending round them far and wide,
They looked coeval with old mother Earth,
And seemed to claim with her an equal birth.

—John Kirke Paulding.

I. BRADDOCK'S ROAD AND THE NATIONAL ROAD

"Then o'er the hills in legions, boys,
Fair freedom's star
Points to the sunset region, boys,
Ha-ha! ha-ha!"

THE movement of population westward through Pennsylvania was not well under way until thousands had trodden Boone's Wilderness Road. Up to a few years before the Revolution, Lancaster, sixty-six miles west of Philadelphia, was thought of as a backwoods settlement, and those who penetrated far beyond it were considered quite venturesome.

The few travelers who found their way across the mountains at this early day had their choice of a route south to Baltimore, then up the Potomac river to Fort Cumberland, and from there by the Wills Creek road, or, as it was known after 1755, Braddock's Road. George Washington, when a colonel of the Virginia Militia, toiled along this road. Of the journey he wrote, "The great difficulty and the labor that it requires to mend and alter the road prevent our marching above three or four miles a day."

This road touched the Youghiogheny * at Redstone Old Fort (now Brownsville, Pennsylvania). From this point many chose to go by water to Pittsburgh, a distance of fifty miles.

* Early travelers found the name of this stream most difficult. Braddock called it "Youghheagany." One appointed to view it for the State spelled the name "Yohiogain." General Forbes made two efforts, Yohageny and Yachiogeny. The Pennsylvania Assembly, in an official communication to Governor Morris, spoke of it as "Yoigogain." Many people solved the difficulty of spelling and pronunciation by calling it simply "Yaw."

General Braddock, however, continued by land his difficult route to Pittsburgh, hewing through the forest a path over which tens of thousands of emigrants later picked their steps as they responded to the call of the West.

Remembrance of the difficulties of this route, and desire to make the passage to the West easier for those who would go to take possession of the rich lands in the country tributary to the Ohio river, led Washington to father a scheme for improving Potomac navigation by a canal. He hoped that, by the use of the canal, travelers would be able to reach the Ohio after making a single portage. So the Patowmack Company was organized on May 17, 1785, at Alexandria, Virginia, Washington being the chairman of the meeting held for the purpose.[1] Work on the project was begun at once, and before many months rapid progress had been made in the face of physical difficulties as well as of trials like those of which the treasurer of the company wrote officially:[1]

Great Falls potowmack July 3d 1786. Sir: We have Been much Imposed upon the last Two weeks in the powder way (we had our Blowers, One Run off the other Blown up) we therefore was Obliged to have two new hands put to Blowing and there was much attention given to them least axedents should happen yet they used the powder Rather too Extravagant, But that was not all they have certainly stolen a Considerable Quantity as we have not more by us than will last until tomorrow noon. Our hole troop is such Villians that we must for the future give the powder into Charge of a person appointed for the purpose to measure it to them on the ground by a Charger.—I hope you will have it in your power to send us powder here Immediately . . . please to send 1 lb. of Salt Petre with the powder, we think we Can make matches with it that will Save powder.

All difficulties were at length overcome and in February, 1802, the locks at Great Falls were opened for service. For twenty-eight years they were in use. Through them passed

immense quantities of merchandise and thousands of settlers bound for the West.

The first step in the final stage in the development of the Potomac route into the West was taken in 1806 when Albert Gallatin, who had a vision of a great Government road to connect the East with Western Pennsylvania, Western Virginia, Ohio and the regions farther West, succeeded in having commissioners appointed by President Jefferson to report on the possibility of his project.

Samuel Adams Drake [2] tells how the necessity of the road was brought home to lawmakers at Washington by the complaints of the settlers in Ohio:

Remoteness began to be felt, first as a serious hindrance to rapid prosperity, and then as a grievance to be redressed in one way or another. With the rise of a feeling that they were being neglected, added to that of a growing power within themselves, sentimental attachment to the Union began to cool.

But when that remoteness was felt to be steadily drawing East and West apart, statesmen began to be alarmed for the national unity and with good reason. Already disunion was being openly talked of in Kentucky; already the prospects of a Western Confederacy were being coldly discussed; already demagogues were asking, not what the Union had cost the whole country, but what was it worth to them alone.

It was then seen that facility of communication alone could bring these two widely separated sections together; so, when Ohio was admitted, the United States had agreed to make a great national highway from the navigable waters of the Atlantic Slope to the Ohio River.

Cumberland, Maryland, was fixed as the starting point. Thence the road was to run to Uniontown and Washington, Pennsylvania. The Ohio was to be crossed at Wheeling, and the road was then to be built on to Columbus and Indianapolis.

The first contracts, for ten miles leading out of Cumber-

land, were signed in 1811. Six years later Uniontown was reached. The first mail coach ran through from Washington to Wheeling in 1818. In 1843 the road was completed to Columbus, and Indianapolis was reached not long afterward. Though the grading was finally done as far as Vandalia, Illinois, and the route was surveyed into Missouri, the finished road stopped at Indianapolis.

The National or Cumberland Road was a financial failure, but the statesmanlike purpose of its sponsors was accomplished. Their aim was to help the West. In this they succeeded. During the generation when most immigrants used the road, the population of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois increased from 783,635 to 3,620,314. Scores of thousands of those who helped to make this increase traveled by this route, which was, from Cumberland to Redstone Old Fort, the successor of the Wills Creek Road and Braddock's Road.

William Cobbett, one of these early travelers on this National Road, said that on July 25, 1818, he met ten wagons loaded with emigrants within eight miles. He had both praise and blame for the roadmakers. Once he wrote: [3]

This general government road is by no means well laid out; it goes straight over the top of the numerous little hills, up and down, up and down. It would have been a great deal nearer in point of time, if not in distance (though I think that, too), if a view had been had to the labour of travelling over these everlasting unevennesses.

Again he said, of the road near Wheeling:

It is covered with a very thick layer of nicely broken stones, or stone, rather, laid on with great exactness both as to depth and width, and then rolled down with an iron roller, which reduces all to one solid mass. This is a road made for ever.

Travelers of to-day who use the National Road, and study the massive stone bridges by which it passes over the

streams along the way, will feel like echoing the words of the English traveler.

Five years after Mr. Cobbett's journey, W. Faux,[4] an English farmer who had promised a friend to pay a visit to a friend's son, an emigrant in Illinois, wrote, on the day he began the ascent of the Alleghenies:

All here is wild, awfully precipitous, and darkly umbrageous, high as the heavens, or low as perdition. I almost resolved on not returning this way by mail, which keeps one in constant alarm, unless the traveler has nerves of iron or brass. Such, however, is the expertness of the drivers here that there is no ground for real apprehension.

Another day he wrote:

On the driver getting down to lock the wheel, the horses started, and instantly struck a stump of a tree, and upset the mail with a crashing fall, which bruised my side, cut my face, and blackened my eyes; the two leaders escaped into the forest, and we saw them no more. The driver went in pursuit of them, and left me to guard and sleep an hour and a half in the damaged vehicle, now nearly bottom upwards. When I awoke it was daylight, and I walked up to a farm log-house, the people of which put their heads out of the window and thus addressed me, "Stranger, come *into* the fire!" and I went in, without being burned. At five, the driver returned, and with two horses only we got under weigh.

In 1828 a traveler[5] told his story of the difficulties and privations of the road:

Nov. 4, Set off from Hagers Town. The Road has been constructed by the government and is excessively rough and bad. It winds along the sides of the hills, from the hights of which you have occasional and extensive views of the country. . . . One interminable forest is the whole prospect before you without relief or background.

Our carriage was built after the manner of an English

Market Cart, the sides protected by a partial covering of leather, admitting both wind and rain. Sleeping with my head and neck exposed to the draft of wind and rain during the whole night, I was so stiff in the morning as to be unable to look in any direction but strait before me. The road was bad; one wheel gave way. Fortunately, we found a waggon by the road side, from which we borrowed a wheel that fitted our carriage exactly.

Nov. 5, Arrived at Brownsville, prettily situated on one of the branches of the Ohio, which we passed in a boat, carriage and all. I began to cheer up at the prospect of the termination of our journey by land. Tired, stiff-necked, and crammed into a waggon. . . . I was by no means in the best of humor. Our whole journey of to-day was employed in ascending and descending the different ridges of the Allegany.

One of the celebrated travelers of early days on the National Road was Joseph Meek, the curious character sent from Oregon to seek the aid of President Polk because of the anxieties caused by the Cayuse War. After an adventurous overland journey, and a spectacular trip down the Mississippi and up the Ohio, he arrived in Wheeling just too late to take the regular stage for Cumberland.[6]

Walking into the stage office, he asked if he might have a conveyance. The astonished official looked at the outlandish dress of the tall man before him, and asked who he was. "I am Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Oregon to the Court of the United States," was his reply. Examination of his credentials bore out his claim, so an extra coach was ordered at once, and he was offered free transportation as far as the relay house. Others took advantage of the unexpected opportunity to continue their journey, and during the long hours on the way Meek told them wonderful tales of the frontier.

Soon after his arrival in Washington, satisfactory arrangements were made for the government of the new

Northwest, and he was sent back, in company with twenty-five men, the suite of the new Governor of Oregon. Along the National Road the party took their way, and in due time they reached the Pacific Coast.

II. STRUGGLES WITH THE ALLEGHENIES

Morn on the Alleghenies! on their side,
Crossing a rocky promontory's brow,
That juts out o'er the wilderness below,
A band of emigrants may be descried.

. . . . .

Upon the naked promontory's brow
That overhung the wilderness below,
The traveler paused to look upon the scene;
The wife upon her husband's arm did lean,
And he upon his rifle silently.
Hushed even was happy childhood's morning glee.
The vastness of the scene weighed down the sense,
The man felt nothing but his impotence,
And His supremacy who reigns alone,
The earth His footstool and the heaven His throne.

—Ephraim Peabody.

A LITTLE north of the road taken by Meek on his way to Wheeling was a second route to the Ohio river. Those who chose this route went by the old Conestoga road to Lancaster, then to Carlisle by a rough track, and on to Pittsburg by way of Bedford and Fort Ligonier, or by a route which bore to the left, four miles from Bedford, and passed through Somerset. This latter road, which was built on an old Indian path, was known as the Glade Road. In 1755, when Braddock was on his way to Pittsburg by the lower route, one hundred and fifty men were at work cutting a way to Pittsburg through Bedford. The work was being done at Braddock's request, that he might have a short route for supplies from Philadelphia. When the roadmakers were four miles beyond Bedford, they heard the news of Braddock's defeat, and discontinued work.

Later General Forbes led a force of six thousand men

along this road, on his way to Fort Du Quesne. From Fort Bedford he completed the pathway through the forest, over the mountains and along the water courses. One by one tremendous obstacles were overcome. The French at Fort Du Quesne learned that a man of might was making his way to them through the wilderness, and they decided that flight would be better than fight; so when General Forbes reached Pittsburg he had nothing to do but occupy the fort in peace. Thus, as Francis Parkman says, General Forbes "opened the great West to English enterprise, took from France half her savage allies, and relieved the western borders from the scourge of Indian War."

This northern route, with its branches, known as the Forbes Road, the Raystown Road, the Glade Road, or the Turkey Foot Road (because it touched the forks of the Youghiogheny, which were arranged like the toes of a turkey), became the highway for soldiers, the route of adventurers, the pathway of emigrants whose eyes were fixed on Wheeling or Pittsburg and the country beyond these settlements. As is indicated by the stories of some of the emigrants (quoted later in the chapter), the Pennsylvania State Road gradually replaced the Glade Road. In many places the routes were identical.

An early traveler [7] by this upper road to the Ohio gave this table of stations and distances:

Philadelphia to Lancaster	66
To Middle-town	26
To Harris' Ferry	10
To Carlisle	17
To Shippenburg	21
To Chamber'stown	11
To Fort Loudon	13
To Fort Littleton	18
To Juniata Creek	19
To Bedford	14
To Foot of the Allegany Mountain	15
To Stony Creek	15

To East side Laurel Hill	12
To Fort Ligonier	9
To Pittsburgh	54
Total	320

When the road through these stations was a mere path through the forest, impassable for wagons, hundreds and thousands of pack-horses threaded their way single file along the narrow track. Usually there were but from ten to fifteen horses in a company, for this was all that two men could manage; one of these men went in advance, while the other brought up the rear.

The track had become a road when, on April 4, 1785, Laurence Butler [8] set out from Pennsylvania to Virginia to survey the lands given by Virginia to the Revolutionary soldiers. His own portion as a captain was four thousand acres, and he was eager to view his estate. One day he wrote:

Crossed a mountain called the Blue Ridge which is only passable at certain places. . . . We travelled through a mountainous country of about eighty miles and crossed a number of little rivers, some of which we were obliged to swim over on our horses, having no ferries, to the foot of the largest mountain in North America called the Alligany. This mountain is 64 miles over, though there are several small rivers in it. When we reached the top of the mountain we found the snow to be three feet deep, which was on the 15th April, and before we got there saw no snow at all. Our horses could hardly travel, and as we descended the mountain the snow grew less and less, and before we arrived at the bottom there was none at all. The rivers in the mountain were very full of water, on account of the snow melting, which obliged us to swim several of them, as there were no boats and very few inhabitants on this cold mountain. We were obliged to make fires at night, and lay out of doors on the blankets which we carried with us. About the 17th we arrived at a river called the Monongahalia which was about 400 yards wide and runs into the

Ohio. We travelled about 300 miles and then fell in with eight gentlemen who were bound for this new country; among them were several brother officers who had served in our army in last war. Workmen were engaged to build us a boat forty-two feet long and fourteen feet wide which was finished in two days. We left that place about the end of April; there were ten of us in the boat, with as many horses. The next day about sunset we arrived at a town called Fort Pitt.

The adventures of John Filson[9] on this road in 1785 are typical of the experiences of the pioneers on their journey to Pittsburg:

In the spring of 1785 he secured a Jersey wagon with a canvas top for the purpose of transporting himself and such articles as he wanted to carry with him to Kentucky. It seems that he had but one horse to draw his wagon built for two, and consequently he made arrangements with John Rice Jones, a young lawyer who wished to go to Kentucky, to use a horse belonging to Jones in his team and furnish seats in the wagon for the wife and child of Jones. With the Joneses as passengers and their luggage added to some books and maps and other articles of his own for freight, the vehicle set out from Wilmington April 25, 1785, and arrived at Philadelphia the same day. On the following day it started on the long, weary, mountainous road to Pittsburg.

He reached Pittsburg on May 26, and the fact that twenty-six days were consumed in making the trip affords some idea of the difficulties of travel in those days. The average distance made per day was about twelve miles, and the members of the party were thankful to accomplish that much in the midst of the obstacles that beset them. No wonder Jones was out of sorts when he reached Pittsburg. Filson had to doctor him, which he did by administering two doses of Peruvian bark, and two "vomits," for which he charged nine shillings.

Jones later told of Filson that on one occasion "while their wagon was crossing the mountains, Filson, being in front and leading the horses, stooped down to examine a curious sod. . . . One of the horses passed on each side of him, and the wagon went over him until the rear axletree was above his head. Filson threw up his head, which, coming in contact with the axletree, pretty nearly made an end of him. He was almost scalped, and made the balance of the way to Pittsburgh with a bandaged head."

On September 27, 1787, Mrs. Mary De Wees [10] set out from Philadelphia for Kentucky. She was not in good health, and her friends feared that she would never reach her journey's end, yet the trip proved to be the very tonic she needed. Her condition is apparent from her statement, as written to a friend in Philadelphia:

Lost all the fine prospects the first day owing to my sickness, which was excessive, being obliged to be led from the Waggon to the bed and from the bed to the Waggon.

On October 2 she told of improvement:

Will you believe me when I tell you I am setting on the Banks of the Susquehannah and can take my bit of ham and Biscuit with any of them.

Later she wrote:

Set off for the North Mountain, which we find so bad we are Obliged to foot it up, and could compair ourselves to nothing but a parcel of goats. . . . Find this the most fatiguing days Journey we have had, the roads so very bad and so very steep, that the horses seem ready to fall backwards. In many places, you would be surprised to see the Children Jumping and Skiping, sometimes quite out of sight, sometimes on horseback, sometimes in the Waggon. . . . The sight of a log house on these Mountains after a fatiguing days Journey affords more real pleasure than all the magnificent buildings your city contains.

October 9. Crossed Sidling hill and were the greatest

part of the day in performing the Journey, the roads being so excessive Steep, sidling and Stony, that it seemed impossible to get along. We were obliged to walk the greatest part of the way up, tho' not without company; there was five waggons with us all this morning to different parts. This night our difficulties began; we were obliged to put up at a cabin at the foot of the hill, perhaps a dozen logs upon one another, with a few slabs for a roof, and the earth for a floor, and a Wooden Chimney constituted this extraordinary Ordinary. . . . There were between twenty and thirty of us, all lay on the floor, [except three, who had a bed.]

October 11. Fell in with a French Gentleman and his family going to Pittsburgh; we all put up at a little hut on the Mountain, which was so small that we prefferred lodging in our waggon to be crowded with Frenchmen and negroes on an earthen floor.

October 13. We in Company with another Waggon were obliged to Encamp in the woods, after a Suitable place at a Convenient distance from a run of water was found, a level piece of ground was pitched upon for our encampment. Our men went to give refreshment to the Horses, we Females, having had a good fire made up, set about preparing Supper, which consisted of an Excellent dish of Coffee, having milk with us, those who chose had a dish of cold ham and pickled beets, with the addition of Bread, Butter, Biscuit and Cheese, made up our repast. After supper, Sister, the children and myself took up our lodging in the waggon, the men with their Blankets laid down at the fireside.

October 15. You would be surprised to see the number of packhorses which travel these roads, ten or twelve in a drove. In going up the North Mountain, Betsy took it into her head to ride a horseback, and Daddy undertook to escort her on his. In a narrow path, at the edge of a very steep place, they met with a company of packers, when her horse took it into his noodle not to stir one foot, but stood and received a thump behind from every pack that pass'd, and whilst Betsy was in a state of the greatest trepidation, expecting every moment to be thrown from her horse, her

Gallant instead of flying to her assistance, stood laughing ready to kill himself at the fun; but the poor girl really looked pitiable.

At the mouth of the Youghiogheny the party took boat to Pittsburg, where they waited for the wagons with the rest of the family goods.

The year after Mrs. De Wees made her trip to Pittsburg Colonel Israel Shreve, father of Henry M. Shreve, for whom Shreveport, Louisiana, was named, traveled from his New Jersey home to Philadelphia, and from there to Pittsburg. In his party were a number of men, women and children, who made use of four two-horse wagons and two three-horse wagons. Four cows followed the wagons.

On July 10 Colonel Shreve wrote in his Journal:[11]

"13½ miles only, occasioned by bad Roads and Crossing the South Mountain and one of my waggons . . . oversetting, bottom upwards, to-day the women were much fatigued by walking. Sarah Hervey walked eight and a half miles over the Hill at one heat."

Extracts only of the journal follow:

July 11. Set out and passed over Roads full of bad mud-holes . . . hindered this morning by getting clasps put round the felloe of a wheel.

July 12. Paraded our beds in a barn.

July 14. Forded a rapid Creek called Yellow Breeches.

July 16. When we dined at Tavern we always made use of our own provision. Set out again in a hard rain, by advice took the right hand road that leads over the three hills, lately opened and made by a Mr. Skinner from Jersey.

July 17. All in good health and high spirits. . . . Set out and ascended the first Mountain so steep that we were obliged to double the team to get up and very stony going down the other side . . . 8 miles to-day.

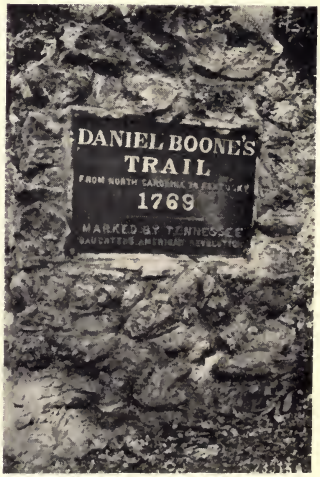
July 18. Set out again and rose the second hill called the North Mountain, this as steep and stony as the first. . . . Coming down the last Hill Daniel Hervey left his stallion to follow the waggon, the horse took an old path

THE FIRST PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON
From "The Magazine of American History"

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

From Schoolcraft's "Historical Conditions and Prospects of the Indians in the United States"

PITTSBURG IN 1790



MARKER ON THE WILDERNESS ROAD

Photograph by the United States Forest Service

TABLET AT THE HOME OF MAJOR ARTHUR ST. CLAIR,
NEAR GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

OLD FORT GADDIS, NEAR UNIONTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

HENRY CLAY MONUMENT AT ELM GROVE, WEST VIRGINIA
(Built to commemorate his work for the National Road)

and caused several hours search before he was found stripped of all his gears but the collar. . . . Had the misfortune to break one of my Waggon wheels, sent it on this evening to be repaired, 8 miles only today: This is the place called the Burnt Cabins, where the road that passes through Chambers Town comes into the old Road said to be twenty miles farther than the new one but much better. . . . Our women complain heavily on account of being obliged to walk on foot over the Mountain.

July 20. Sent the repaired wheel to the Waggon, About eleven o'clock had a further hindrance by having three shoes put on, heavy complaints among the Women.

July 21. Set out and ascended Sideling Hill up a good new Road made by said Skinner* . . . Went on over exceedingly stony roads to Rays Hill. Here cut saplings and chained to our Waggons, this hill steep, gullied, and very stony. Skinners men at work making a new Road down . . . one felloe of one of my Waggons gave way.

July 22. Passed through Bedford, halted for a horse shoe . . . halted at John Bonnet's Tavern at the forks of the old Pennsylvania and Glade Roads, 15 miles to-day.

July 24. Ann Beck daughter of Joseph Beck departed this life to the great grief of her parents, more so on account of being far distant from their former home.

July 25. Send to Berlin for a Coffin which arrived towards evening when the child was decently interred. . . .

July 26. Hired George Pancakes and two horses to put before my heaviest waggon for 8/4 per day and find him and horses. Set out, halted at a Blacksmiths, had two clasps put on my Waggon wheel and one horse shoe put on.

July 27. Set out and after going a few hundred yards missed the most material part of Daniel Harvey's property, it having gone before and taken a wrong road, a hue and cry was raised when to his great joy it was found unhurt. . . . Ascended to the top of the Mountain over miry and stony Roads, then soon began to descend, first down a short steep hill, then a long, gradual descent through Chestnut

* The road work done by Mr. Skinner was paid for by the State. The road over North Mountain cost £700, while that over Sideling Hill cost £750.

Brush, . . . this Road down is over logs and stones enough to dash all to pieces: at length we arrived at a house in Legenear Valley. . . . Our women exceedingly fatigued by walking over the Mountain.

July 28. Set out again and found the steepest hill we had met with, in going up Chestnut Hill were obliged to put six horses to one of the heaviest waggons. Descend the Ridge and come into the other road, which is so miry as to sink the waggons in many places, stopped at a Blacksmith and had one shoe put on one of my horses. Set out again and met Joseph Wood on his way to Jersey from Little Kenhaway, he informed me that a house was ready for me in the forks of Youghiana, went on and was overtaken by John Fox with the intelligence that one of Daniel Harvey's Waggons had broke down. . . . D. Harvey last evening in coming from his Waggon to Mr. Bennetts, got out of the Road, it being very dark he could not find it again and was forced to take up his lodging in the Woods until day.

July 29. Sent for D. Harvey's broken waggon and got a new axle-tree put in. We are now clear of the Mountains over which we have with much difficulty got so far safely except the misfortune of losing the child.

August 1. All well, after a very fatigueing journey of 25 days since leaving Jersey. The house provided for me is a new one, 30 feet by 26, two stories high, built of hewed white oak logs, with a very good stone chimney. The house is not finished, no family having lived in it till we came. We set to, stopped it with lime and clay, laid the upper floor with Chirety [cherry?] boards, and it is now pretty comfortable for Summer.

As to the inhabitants, they are mostly from Jersey, very kind to new comers, as well as to one another; they live in a plain way, not spending much in Dress and foppery, but are well provided with the real necessaries of life.

On December 26, 1789, Colonel Shreve wrote to his brother from "Forks of Yough," that he had obtained the whole tract of Washington's Bottoms, on rent, for five years. "The General was pleased to let me have the whole

of the Bottoms at my own offer. . . . The old farm contains about 80 acres of improved upland, and about 40 of the best kind of meadow, a bearing orchard of 120 apple and 100 peach trees: the buildings as good as most in this Country . . . and four other improved farms, that at this time rent for £43/10. I am accountable for the whole rent which altogether is £60."

His reasons for making the lease he gave thus:

I considered that land at the Miami Settlement was rising fast, and that I had better pay this low rent for a well improved farm than barter away my land at a low rate for land here—Land does not rise much in this place, owing to the general emigration down the River. It seems as if people were crazy to get afloat on the Ohio. Many, having very good livings here, set out for they know not where, but too often find their mistake.

On Monday, April 14, 1788, Colonel John May[12] set out on horseback, in company with two companions, "And . . . stood for the wilderness of the Western World."

He told of ascending the "South or Blue Mountain, which, at a distance, has a terrible appearance to a stranger tired and worn down by constant fatigue. But the more we approach it the less formidable it appears. Instead of climbing this son of Alleghana, we steal in imperceptibly between two monstrous hills for a number of miles; but finally have to climb stoutly ere we reach the top. While we are between these hills . . . we advance by the side of a swift running rivulet for a considerable distance, and cross the same stream, in a distance of two miles, twelve times. . . ."

From Mercersburg, at the foot of North Mountain, Colonel May mounted his horse, "in order to mount the mountain." "This mountain is ten miles over," he continued. "It took us three hours and a half to cross it. It is, I can truly say, the hardest to climb we have yet attempted, and makes one of the four capital ranges of moun-

tains which belong to the family of Alleghana, and the sight of which generally strikes such terror into travelers. This, with his father and mother, separate the Eastern from the Western world. The names of this ancient family are: Alleghana, North Mountain, South Mountain, Sideling Ridge, Laurel Mountain, and Chestnut Ridge."

The story of the journey continued:

May 3. At 10 o'clock to-day we were on the ridge-pole, and Noah-like, could look into the old world and new. These mountains I consider as the backbone of the continent, this tremendous range reaching from Cape Horn to the North Pole . . . and so high is it that it is itself fixed on the top of the everlasting hills.

F. A. Michaux,[13] a French traveler, who went this way in 1802, would have been able to sympathize with the women in Colonel Shreve's party who had to walk over the mountain. He rode by stage as far as Shippensburg, but there it became necessary to proceed by his own conveyance. He tried to buy a horse, but was disgusted by the avarice of natives, who, taking advantage of travelers, sought to make them pay more than double. At length he bought an animal, in partnership with an American officer, who had been a fellow traveler on the stage. The men agreed to ride and walk by turns.

George Imlay, when passing through Pennsylvania, had his share of trouble with conveyances, and he thought it worth while to write,[14] for the benefit of those who should come after him, full directions as to conveyance. He said:

Travelers or emigrants take different methods of transporting their baggage, goods, or furniture, from the places they may be at to the Ohio, according to circumstances, or their object in coming to the country. For instance, if a man is traveling only for curiosity, or has no family or goods to remove, his best way would be to purchase a horse and take the route through the Wilderness; but provided he has a family, or goods of any sort to remove, his best

way then would be to purchase a waggon and team of horses to carry his property to Redstone Olde Forte, or to Pittsburg. . . . The waggon may be covered with canvas, and, if it is the choice of the people, they may sleep in it at night with the greatest safety. But if they should dislike that, there are inns of accommodation the whole distance on the different roads. . . . By having two or three camp kettles, and stopping every evening when the weather is fine upon the bank of some rivulet, and by kindling a fire, they may soon dress their food. . . . True, the charges at inns on those roads are remarkably reasonable, but I have mentioned these particulars as there are many unfortunate people in the world to whom the saving of every shilling is an object.

One of the most interesting narratives of experiences in crossing Pennsylvania is that of Margaret Dwight,[15] the niece of President Timothy Dwight, of Yale College, who in 1810 went by wagon from New Haven to Warren, Ohio, in the party of Deacon Wolcott and his wife and daughter. The route taken was by way of Easton and Bethlehem to Carlisle.

At a tavern on the way an old lady asked, "Well, Gals, where are you going?" "To New Connecticutt," was the reply. "You bant tho," was the surprised rejoinder. "Why what a long journey! Do you ever expect to get there? How far is it?" "Near 600 miles," she was told. "Your husbands with you?" was the next question. "No, ma'am," came the answer. At this the old lady could not contain herself. "Not got your husbands!" she said. "Well, I don't know—they say there's wild Indians there."

Concerning an inn Miss Dwight wrote:

The house is very small & very dirty—it serves for a tavern, a store, & I should imagine hog's pen stable & everything else. The air is so impure I have scarcely been able to swallow since I enter'd the house. Every kind of thing in the room where they live—a chicken half picked hangs over the door & pots, kettles, dirty dishes, potatoe

barrels & every thing else & the old woman it is beyond my power to describe her. She is a fat, dirty, ugly looking creature, yet I must confess very obliging. . . . Our room is just large enough to contain a bed, a chair and a very small stand—our bed has one brown sheet & one pillow—the sheet however appear'd to be clean, which was more than we got at Nash's—there we were all obliged to sleep in the same room without curtain or any other screen & our sheets there were so dirty I was afraid to sleep there.

A few days later this entry was made in the Journal:

I am almost discouraged—we shall never get to New Connecticutt or anywhere else, at the rate we go on. We went but eleven miles yesterday & 13 to-day.

When the party was ten miles west of Carlisle she wrote:

We came but a little peice, as the Dutchmen say, today, & are in a most curious place tonight. If possible I will describe it. It is a log hut built across the road from the tavern, for *movers*—that the landlord need not be bother'd with them. Had it been possible for our horses to have reached another inn we should not have staid with the cross old dutch fellow—we have a good fire, a long dirty table, a few boards nailed up for a closet, a dozen long boards in one side & as many barrels in the other—2 benches to set on, two bottomless chairs, & a floor containing dirt enough to plant potatoes. The man says he has been so bothered with movers, that he has taken down his sign, for he does not need his tavern to live. If we had a mind to stay we might, but if we chose to go on he had no objection.

Of another experience she said:

. . . Last night Susan & I went to bed early, as we slept ill the night before . . . we were put in an old garret that had holes in the roof big enough to crawl through. Our bed was on the floor, harder it appear'd to me, than boards could be & dirty as possible—a dirty feather bed our only covering.

After crossing one of the Allegheny Mountains, she said:

We all walk'd the whole distance over—I did not stop at all to rest till I reach'd the top . . . It is not a little fatiguing to walk up a long mountain I find—When we had nearly reach'd the foot of it, we heard some music in the valley below . . . soon found it was from the bells of a waggoner—He had twelve bells on the collars of his horses, (not sleigh bells) & they made a great variety of sounds which were really musical at a distance.

This was written of an adventure at a roadside inn:

. . . I was very much frightened by a drunken waggoner, who came up to me, as I stood by the door, . . . he put his arm round my neck, & said something which I was too frightened to hear. It is the first time the least insult has been offered to any of us.

Other illuminating entries in the Journal may be quoted:

We have concluded the reason so few are willing to return from the Western Country is not that the country is so good, but because the journey is so bad.

. . . The stream runs so fast, that we did not dare cross it alone, as there was nothing but a log to cross on; so the waggoners & our own party were obliged to lead & pilot us over the stream & thro' a most shocking place as ever I saw.

. . . They say there has been a *heap* of people moving this fall; I don't know exactly how many a heap is, or a *sight* either, which is another way of measuring people—I would be *apt* to think it was a *terrible* parcel, to use the language of the people round me.

. . . From what I have seen and heard, I think the State of Ohio will be well fill'd before winter,—Waggons without number every day go on. One went on containing forty people—We almost every day see them with 18 or 20—one stopt here to-night with 21.

Three years after Miss Dwight's passage over the mountain B. H. Latrobe took his family from Washington to

Pittsburg, where he was to build the *Buffalo,* the fourth steamer on the Ohio. His son, John, then thirteen years old, remembered the journey so well that in later years he was able to write:[16]

The journey began in our own carriage, drawn by Peacock and Turkey, two stout bay horses that had been for some years in service. And this carriage deserves description. It had been built after a design of my father and its color was a dark olive green. It had the usual seats for four persons vis-à-vis, and the driver's seat was under the same roof. But instead of giving him the entire width of the seat a semi-circular space in the centre was surrounded with a back, elbow high, on either side of which were nooks that we children called "nests" and which we occupied with our backs to the horses and our feet over the front seat. This gave us a capital chance to talk with David, the coachman, a jet black little fellow who drove for my father as long as the latter had horses to drive. To obviate the possibility of one of us children falling out of the usual side door, while leaning against it to look out, my father put the door behind, making it necessary to scramble over the hind seat to get into the carriage. The curtains were of leather, and were so contrived that by an ingenious arrangement of pulleys, they could be drawn into the roof instead of being fastened at the edges in the usual way. In the bottom of the vehicle was a well, a good sized box that could be lifted out, its cover forming a part of the floor. It was waterproof, as it needed to be when the carriage was crossing fordable streams. I am particular in this description because of the impression left on my memory of its remarkable contrivances.

My impression is that the first stage of our journey was Montgomery Court-House, from which we dragged through the long and wearying distance to Pittsburgh. After passing through Boonsboro on the National Road we had nothing better than the common country roads to travel on, and how we pulled through them with the same pair of horses is to this day to me a wonder. It rained nearly every day. Sometimes we would lay by to rest the horses, sometimes

have to pass into the fields to avoid the mudholes of the road. I fell sick of fever and ague and shook and burned alternately for days.

The journey made in May, 1817, by Morris Birkbeck, English emigrant, began at Norfolk, Virginia, where he landed. An interesting glimpse of one method of transportation, as well as of expense, is afforded by his statement that from Richmond to Fredericksburg he went in "two hacks, which are light coaches with two horses, a Jersey waggon, and one horse for the baggage." The trip required two days, and the expense was, for the carriage, $70, and on the road $33. "This for nine persons amounts to 52 shillings each," the emigrant recorded in his diary.[17] Then he made the comment, "dear, but very agreeable traveling."

The next hint as to the road is given six days later at McConnel's Town: "The road we have been traveling terminates at this place, where it strikes the great turnpike from Philadelphia to Pittsburg; and with the road ends the line of stages by which we have been traveling; a circumstance of which we knew nothing until our arrival here, having entered ourselves as passengers at Georgetown, for Pittsburg, by the Pittsburg stage, as it proposed to be."

So here we are, nine in number, one hundred and thirty miles of mountainous country between us and Pittsburg. We learn that the stages which pass daily from Philadelphia and Baltimore are generally full, and that there are now many persons waiting at Baltimore for places; no vehicles of any kind to be hired, and here we must either stay or walk off: the latter we prefer; and separating, each our bundle, from the little that we had of travelling stores, we are to undertake our mountain pilgrimage, accepting the alternative most cheerfully, after the dreadful shaking of the last hundred miles by stage.

The English emigrant was amazed when he saw how many companions he had on the road. "We have now

fairly turned our backs on the old world," he said, "and find ourselves in the very stream of emigration. Old America seems to be breaking up, and moving westward. We are seldom out of sight, as we travel on this grand track towards the Ohio, of family groups behind, and before us, some with a view to a particular spot, close to a brother, perhaps, or a friend who has gone before, and reported well of the country; many, like ourselves, when they arrive in the wilderness will find no lodge prepared for them."

The account proceeded:

A small waggon so light that you might almost carry it, yet strong enough to bear a good load of bedding and utensils, and provisions, and a swarm of young citizens, and to sustain marvellous shocks in the passage over these rocky heights, with 2 small horses and sometimes a cow or two, comprise their all: excepting a little store of hard earned cash for the land office of the district, where they may obtain title for as many acres as they possess half dollars, being one-fourth of the purchase money. The waggon has a tilt or cover, made of a sheet or perhaps a blanket. The family are seen before, behind, or within the vehicle, according to the road or the weather or perhaps the spirits of the party. The New Englanders, they say, may be known by the cheerfulness of the women advancing in front of the vehicle; the Jersey people by their being fixed steadily within it; while the Pennsylvanians creep lingering behind, as though regretting the homes they have left. A cart and single horse frequently afford the means of transfer; sometimes a horse and pack saddle. Often the back of the poor pilgrim bears all his effects, and his wife follows bare-footed.

The startled traveler could not help saying of the Americans:

They are also a migrating people; and even when in prosperous circumstances can contemplate a change of

situation which, under our old establishments and fixed habits, none but the most enterprising would venture upon when urged by adversity. To give an idea of the internal movements of this vast hive, about 12,000 waggons passed between Baltimore and Philadelphia, and this place, in the last year, with from four to six horses carrying from 35 to 40 cwt. The cost of carriage is about seven dollars per cwt. from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, and the money paid for the conveyance of goods on the road exceeded £300,000 sterling.

Add to these the numerous stages loaded to the utmost, and the innumerable travellers on horseback, on foot, and in light waggons, and you have before you a scene of bustle and business, extending over a space of three hundred miles, which is truly wonderful.

At Pittsburg horses were bought, and the party set out for Cincinnati by land. "Well mounted and well furnished with saddle bags and blankets, we proceeded, nine in party, on our westward course to Washington, Pennsylvania," Mr. Birkbeck wrote.

One day in Ohio a visit was paid to the log farm-house of an Irishman who had taken up the land fourteen years before, along a blazed road, across the wilderness. His evident prosperity and content pleased the man who was making a like venture.

Near Zanesville, Ohio, the party was greeted by "four industrious pedestrians, returning eastward from a tour of observation through this state." Evidently they had been prospecting. "One of them, a hatter, resolves to remain in his old position in Philadelphia."

When at Madison, Indiana, Mr. Birkbeck wrote, "Our road has been mostly from three to six miles from the river, passing over fertile hills and alluvial bottoms. The whole is appropriated; but although settlements multiply daily, many large intervals remain between the clearings."

Of an experience farther on in Indiana this account was given:

Our rear party, consisting of one of the ladies, a servant boy, and myself, were benighted in consequence of an accidental detention, at the foot of one of these rugged hills; and without being well provided, were compelled to make our first experiment of "camping out." A traveller in the woods should always carry flint, steel, tinder, and matches; a few biscuits, a half pint phial of spirits, and a tin cup, a large knife or tomahawk; with them and his two blankets and his great coat and umbrella, he need not be uneasy should any unforeseen delay require his sleeping under a tree.

But the tinder and matches were in the baggage of the advance-division, and the night was dark and rainy. Already, however, the English was learning to be resourceful. Taking his powder flask, he moistened a piece of paper and rubbed it with gunpowder. This touch paper was placed on an old handkerchief. On this gunpowder was scattered. Flint and steel soon brought a flame, wood was ignited, and a fire was built.

In spite of such misadventures, Mr. Birkbeck said, when near the end of his long journey:

As to travelling in the backwoods of America, I think there is none so agreeable, after you have used yourself to repose on your own pallet either on the floor of a cabin or under the canopy of the woods, with an umbrella over your head and a noble fire at your feet. You will then escape the only serious nuisances of American travelling, viz. hot rooms and swarming beds, exceeding, instead of repairing, the fatigues of the day. Some difficulties occur from ferries, awkward fords, and rude bridges, with occasional swamps; but such is the sagacity and surefootedness of the horses that accidents happen very rarely.

At Shawneetown the Englishman paid 720 dollars, one-fourth of the purchase money of 1440 acres in what is now Edwards County, Illinois. His reason for pushing on so far West he gave in a later volume:[18]

Had we remained in the state of Ohio we must have paid from twenty to fifty dollars per acre for land which is technically called "improved," but is in fact deteriorated; or have purchased, at an advance of 1000 or 1500 per cent unimproved land from speculators; and in either case should have labored under the inconvenience of settling detached from society of our own choice, and without the advantage of choice as to soil or situation. We saw many eligible sites and fine tracts of country, but these were precisely the sites and the tracts which had secured the attachment of their possessors. . . .

Having given up the Ohio, we found nothing attractive on the eastern side of Indiana; and situations to the south, on the Ohio river bounding that state, were so well culled as to be in the predicament above described; offering no room for us without great sacrifice of money and society. The western side of Indiana, on the banks of the Wabash, is liable to the same and other objections. The northern part of Indiana is still in possession of the Indians.

But a few miles farther west opened our way into a country preferable in itself to any we had seen, where we could choose for ourselves, and to which we could invite our friends; and where, in regard to communication with Europe, we could command equal facilities, and foresee greater, than in the state of Ohio, being much nearer the grand outlet at New Orleans.

I expect to see around me in prosperity many of my old neighbors, whose hard fare has often embittered my own enjoyment. Three of them have already made the effort, and succeeded in getting out to us. This delights us. . . . Two more are waiting at Philadelphia for an invitation which is now on its way. They wept at parting with their companions who are now here, but they waited further, thinking they would never reach our abode *"so far west."*

Two brothers, and the wife of one of them . . . have made their way out to us . . . They landed at Philadelphia, not knowing where on this vast continent they should find us: from thence they were directed to Pittsburg . . . at Pittsburg they bought a little boat for six or seven

dollars and Came gently down the Ohio, to Shawneetown: from there they proceeded on foot till they found us.

. . . If it were really so unwise to migrate westward, out of the tens (I was going to say hundreds) of thousands who move annually from the eastern states into this western wilderness, we should hear of *some returning* . . .

Privations I cannot enumerate. Their amount depends on the previous habits and present disposition of individuals: for myself and family, the privations already experienced or anticipated are of small account compared with the advantages.

Always Mr. Birkbeck was an optimist. Once he owned that "roads are in a state of nature," but he added the words, "as yet," showing what he expected. Again he said "By April next I hope we shall be fixed in our Cabin on the prairie; and in two years I hope to see a populous and thriving neighborhood, where in July last I could not find a single inhabitant."

III. BY STAGE, BY EMIGRANT WAGON, AND ON FOOT

From the close-covered depths of the big wagon-bed
Peeped out lassie and tiny towhead—
Half a dozen at least, for the pioneer's wife
Thought to people the land was a part of her life;
And they huddled and whispered, and clamored and yelled,
At the noises they heard and the sights they beheld,
While the father and mother contentedly strode
Toward their far-away home—down the National Road.
—James Ball Naylor.

In October, 1817, Henry Bradshaw Fearon went over the road to Pittsburg. Probably the season was unusually bad, for, after crossing the Juniata, he wrote:[19]

Nothing could exceed the badness of the roads; yet the understanding between the driver and his horses was so perfect that we proceeded, though with almost broken bones, with the exactness of mechanism. A London coachman would in half an hour have dashed the strongest English stage to pieces, and probably broken the necks of the passengers.

When crossing the Dry Ridge, he spoke of the "great numbers of families and stage waggons: some of the former were from Maine, and had been out 80 days."

The progress of the stage was so slow that Mr. Fearon proposed walking:

This afforded me an opportunity of entering into the views and little histories of fellow-travellers. . . . The women I found the most communicative: their husbands being chiefly engaged in dragging along their wretched nags. The first I conversed with was from Jersey, out 32

days; she was sitting upon a log, which served the double purpose of a seat and a fire; their waggon had broken down the day before; her husband was with it at a distant blacksmith's; she had been seated there all night. . . .

On Laurel Hill, with the thermometer at six degrees above zero, he came to a family from Massachusetts who had camped out during the night.

At five o'clock we found them cooking potatoes for breakfast. They very freely offered us a portion of their homely fare. Perhaps in Essex I should have thought this no treat—on Laurel Ridge it was a most acceptable one; so naturally does our inclination adapt itself to our circumstances. The family consisted of ten persons: an old lady, her son and his wife, with seven children, of both sexes, from two to sixteen years of age; all in excellent health, and full of life and spirits; despising difficulties, and anticipating a rich reward when they arrived in the "land of Canaan."

Next day Mr. Fearon wrote:

I came up with a woman and girl, with two infants in their arms, who came, to use their own language, "from Zomerzetzhire in Hingland." They . . . were sorry they had ever been persuaded to leave it; they had been told that this was the finest place in the world, but they had experienced nothing but difficulties since they had set their foot upon it. The husband was behind, dragging on their little all. It was 45 days since they had left Philadelphia. I assisted them over a brook, and endeavoured to comfort them with the hope that when they once got settled they would be well repaid for all their toil.

Glimpses of the amount of travel on the road were given:

I passed on my road from Chambersburgh to Pittsburgh, being 153 miles, one hundred and three stage waggons, drawn by four and six horses, proceeding from Philadel-

phia and Baltimore to Pittsburg—seventy-nine from Pittsburg to Baltimore and Philadelphia,—sixty-three waggons, with families, from the several places following: twenty from Massachusetts, ten from the district of Maine, fourteen from Jersey, twelve from Connecticutt, two from Maryland, one from Pennsylvania, one from England, one from Holland, and one from Ireland, about two hundred persons on horseback, twenty on foot, one beggar, one family with their waggon returning from Cincinnati entirely disappointed—a circumstance which, though rare, is by no means, as some might suppose, miraculous.

A few days later the writer left Pittsburg for Ohio, "the State in which every emigrant I saw in the Aleganies told me he designed settling," he said. Then he added, "While there the inhabitants are on 'the move' for Alabama and Missouri."

William Cobbett was another traveler who was loud in the praise of the skillful drivers over the Alleghenies. In his book [20] he wrote:

I can say nothing in Commendation of the road over these mountains: but I must admire the drivers and their excellent horses. The road is every thing that is bad, but the skill of the drivers and the well-constructed vehicles and the capital old English horses overcame everything. We were rather singularly fortunate in not breaking down, or upsetting; I certainly should not have been surprised if the whole thing, horse and all, had gone off the road and been dashed to pieces. A new road is making, however, and when that is completed, the journey west will be shorter in point of time, just one half.

While crossing the Allegheny Mountains Mr. Cobbett "got overturned (a common accident here) *only* once, and then received very little damage: myself none, some of my fellow travellers a few scratches. We scrambled out, and, with the help of some waggoners, set the vehicle on its wheels again, adjusted our 'plunder' . . . and drove on again without being detained more than five minutes."

Still another traveler who has left a full account of his experience on the road to Pittsburg was James Flint, a visitor from England in 1819. At Philadelphia he arranged for passage at the Coach-Office for the first stage in his journey to Pittsburg. There were so many travelers that he was obliged to engage his place days in advance. He was rather critical of the coach in which he rode: he described it [21] as "a large, clumsy vehicle, carrying twelve passengers, greatly encumbered by large bags, and he noticed that as a substitute for glass windows, a large roll of leather was let down on each side in bad weather." But he looked with greater favor on his conveyance when he passed the "family waggons" bound westward, in which the aged and infants rode, while the young and strong walked.

At Chambersburg he wrote:

Several branches of what has been very properly called the current of emigration, being here united, strangers from the Eastern Country, and from Europe, are passing in an unceasing train. An intelligent gentleman, at this place, informed me that this stream of emigration has flowed more copiously this year than at any former period; and that the people now moving westward are ten times more numerous than they were ten years ago.* His computation is founded on the comparative amount of the stage-coach business, and on careful observation. . . . The gentleman alluded to says that shades of character, sensibly different from one another, are forming in the western States. He represents the Kentuckians to be a high-toned people, who frequently announce their country, as if afraid of being mistaken for inhabitants of Ohio State; and the Ohioans as having less pride of country, being less assuming in their demeanour, but not less agreeable in conversation, nor less practical in business transactions.

Two days later Mr. Flint and two other passengers decided to walk because they were told that rougher roads

* This growth in emigration from the East was due, in large measure, to the hard times that followed the War of 1812.

than any they had experienced were before them. They found a waggoner who agreed to carry their equipment to Pittsburg. "For my portmanteau, weighing about fourteen pounds, he charged three dollars," is the rueful statement in the letter telling of the day's experiences.

Of a roadside adventure Mr. Flint wrote:

At Macconnels Town we knocked at the door of a tavern, heard a noise within, which convinced us that the people were astir, but not willing to hear us. On making louder application, the landlord saluted us: "Who's there?" With some reluctance he let us in, grumbling at the lateness of our arrival, it being ten minutes past ten o'clock. He affected to be unwilling to let us have supper; but while he was refusing a female commenced cooking for us.

Next morning he wrote:

From beds which we last night saw on the floor of the bar-room, a numerous group of Swiss emigrants had risen. One of them, an old man with a long beard, has a truly patriarchal appearance. The females wore hats, and are of a hardy and masculine favor. About a mile from Macconnels Town we met with a foot traveller, who told us that he had settled in Illinois, by the Wabash, about fifty miles above Vincennes. The ground, he said, "is as good as man ever set a foot on." He was on his way to move his family from New York State, a journey of 1400 miles.

Next day, on Sideling Hill, Mr. Flint observed that the wagon path was worn into a deep rut or ravine. "The first waggoner that gets into the track blows a horn to warn others against meeting him in the narrow pass," he wrote. While climbing the hill he came up with "a singular party of travelers—a man with his wife and three children. The eldest of the progeny had the youngest tied on his back, and the father pushed a wheelbarrow containing the moveables of the family. They were removing from New Jersey . . . to Pittsburg. Abrupt edges of rock, higher than the wheel,

occasionally interrupted the passage. Their humble carriage must be lifted over these." A little farther onward he passed a young woman carrying a sucking child in her arms, and leading a very little one by the hand.

It was remarked that it was impossible to take particular notice of all the travelers on the way. "We could scarcely look before or behind without seeing some of them," he said. "The Canterbury pilgrims were not so diversified nor so interesting as these."

Sometimes the night was spent in an inn,

a log, a frame or a brick house, frequently with a wooden piazza in front. From the top of a tall post the sign-board is suspended. On it, a Washington, a Montgomery, a Wayne, a Pike or a Jackson is usually pourtrayed, in a style that might not be easily deciphered except for the name attached. On the top of the house is a small bell, which is twice rung before meals. Immediately after the second peal travelers and boarders assemble around the table, where they commence eating without preface.

The lodgings furnished in such a tavern were not always comfortable. Frequently there were several beds in a room. The traveler, accustomed to the comforts of England, thought the fact worth noting that "water is rarely to be met with in bedrooms, washing is, of course performed under a shed, behind the barn, or at the pump," but he added, "the man who cannot enjoy a pleasant temper under privations of a part of the comforts of a more advanced state of society, is surely to be pitied for having business in the backwoods of America."

Many nights were spent by the roadside, wrapped in blankets which were carried along the way. At first he hesitated to sleep out of doors, but when he noted how many of the emigrants built their fires and slept by the side of the road, he was ready to follow their example. To his surprise he found this method of passing the night preferable to sleeping in an inn where he was always liable

to have a strange bedfellow taking a place with him during the night.

He met two young men on their way eastward. "You are going the wrong way," they were told. "No, you are going the wrong way," was the reply. "I have been at Pittsburg, and in the state of Ohio, and I declare it is the most detestable country in the world."

One day at dark the travelers "came into a track so wet and miry that it would be considered impassable in some parts of the world." "We groped our way along the side of it," the traveler wrote, "over logs, and occasionally through the wood, to avoid the humid bog. Two young men of the neighborhood came forward, told us that we had just entered the worst part of the road, and as they were going in the same direction, offered to conduct us.

The next tavern is one where whisky is sold, but the occupiers of it could not be troubled with lodging travelers. They told us that there is another tavern a mile forward. . . .

The other tavern was so completely thronged with movers that a multitude of them had taken up their lodgings in a barn. We were permitted to stop, on condition of all three sleeping in one bed, which was said to be a large and good one. Two-thirds of the bar-room floor was covered by the beds of weary travellers lying closely side by side, and the remaining part occupied by people engaged in drinking, and noisy conversation. The room in which supper was taken was too small to admit any large proportion of the company at once.

On September 24 he wrote:

At half past five all were in bustle, preparing for the road. Some settling their bill with the hostess, others waiting to settle: Some round a long wooden trough at the pump, washing or drying themselves with their pocket-handkerchiefs. . . . Some women, catching children who had escaped naked from bed, others packing up their clothes or putting them into waggons.

The new road from Philadelphia to Pittsburg is now in an advanced stage of progress. Much of it is finished, and corresponding parts of the old track abandoned. Probably, by two years hence, the traveller will have a turnpike from the one city to the other. The improvement is important, but it is not one that deserves unqualified praise. In multitudes of cases it passes through hollows, and over eminences, without regard to that minimum of inequality which in a great measure constitutes the value of a road. In some cases, the vertical curve, formed by passing over rising ground, is so long that, applied laterally, the eminences surmounted would have been altogether avoided. The road from Baltimore to Wheeling, now constructing at the expense of the government, is understood to be more judiciously laid off. Its competition must ere long give the proprietors of the Philadelphia line an instructive lesson on the economical application of labor.

Yet the very same year Thomas Nuttall, in speaking of the completion of the turnpike from Philadelphia to within forty miles of Pittsburg, said this would enable Pennsylvania to compete with the National Road.

Conditions were somewhat improved when in 1822 or 1823 Baynard Rush Hall traveled from Philadelphia to Pittsburg on his way to Indiana, where he planned to take up government land. The narrative of his trip was given in a volume published a few years later: [22]

From Philadelphia to Pittsburg was formerly a journey of days. Hence, to avoid traveling on the Sabbath, it was arranged by us to set out at three o'clock A.M. on Monday. A porter, however, of the stage-office aroused us at one o'clock; when, hurrying on our garments, we were speedily following our baggage trundled by the man in that most capacious of one-wheeled carriage—an antiquated wheelbarrow.

Difficulties with the baggage were not over when the wheelbarrow reached the stage office. Mr. Hall paid for

two seats, for himself and Mrs. Hall, but to his surprise he was told that he must pay extra for his wife's baggage; evidently a double allowance of baggage was not made on two tickets sold together. And when Mrs. Hall's trunk was being roped to the rack at the rear of the stage, the rope broke, the trunk fell, and the contents were scattered in the street.

The stage "was most judiciously filled with three tiers. The lower tier was composed of saddle-bags, valises, small trunks and carpet-bags; the second, of human beings supported upright by an equal squeeze on all sides; and then, on the condensed laps of the living tier, rested the third tier, made up of extra cloaks, some bandboxes and work-baskets, several spare hats in pasteboard cases, half a dozen canes and umbrellas, and one fowling-piece done up in green baize." Of course there was some growling, but the men and women, after the manner of crowded passengers in a public conveyance, were soon laughing at their discomfort.

Conditions were still worse when stages were changed at Lancaster. The new vehicle was smaller, but there were even more passengers than before. "Oh! the cramming—the jamming—the bumping about of that night! How we practised the indirect style of discontent and cowardice, in giving it to the intruders over the shoulders of stage owners, and agents, and drivers, and horses! And how that crazy, rattling, rickety, old machine rolled and pitched and flapped its curtains and walloped us for the abuse, till we all were quashed, bruised, and mellowed into a quaking lump of passive, untalking, sullen victims!"

From the hotel in Lancaster the stage "dashed away . . . with such vengeance and mischief in the speed that the shops ran backward in alarm . . . But the winged horses, once beyond Lancaster, turned again into hoofy quadrupeds moving nearly three miles per hour."

Though the stage was crowded, there seemed always to be room on the driver's seat for a friend or for an extra driver. One of these extra drivers entertained the company

by breaking out into a song that was typical of the strange unmusical lyrics of these knights of the road:

Come all ye young people, I'm going for to sing,
Consarnin' Molly Edwards and her lovyer, Peter King,
How this young woman did break her lovyer's heart,
And when he went and hung hisself how hern did in her smart.

This Molly Edwards she did keep the turnpike gate,
And travilyers allowed her the most puttiest in our state,
But Peter for a livin' he did foller the drovyer's life,
And Molly she did promise him she'd go and be his wife.

So Peter he to Molly goes as he cums through the gate,
And says, says he, oh! Molly, why do you make me wait?
I'm done a drovin' hossis and come a courtin' you,
Why do you sarve me so, as I'm your lovyer true?

Then Molly she toss'd up her nose and tuk the drovyer's toll,
But Peter he goes and hangs hisself that night unto a pole,
And Molly says, says she, I wish I'd been his wife,
And Peter he come and hanted her the rest of all his life.

Some time after leaving Chambersburg the stage began to lumber up the mountains. The men walked, while the women rode. On Cove Mountain Mr. Hall wanted to gaze "on the mingled grandeur and beauty of the scene." "Few," he said, "are unmoved by the view from that top; as for myself I was ravished. Was I not on the dividing ridge between two worlds—the worn and faded East, the new and magic West? And yet I now felt, and painfully felt, that we were bidding adieu to home and entering on the untried; still hope was superior to fear, and I was eager to pass those other peaks. . . ."

When the stage overtook the waiting male passengers, it proceeded down the mountain "with a velocity alarming and yet exhilarating to persons unused to the style of a mountain driver. The danger is with due care less, indeed, than the appearance; yet the sight of the places where wagons and stages are said to have tumbled gigantic somer-

sets over miniature precipices will force one involuntarily to say in a supplicating tone to Jehu, 'Take care driver, here's where that stage went over, and poor Mr. Bounce was killed!' To this caution Jehu replied, 'Oh! no danger. Besides, he wan't killed—he only smashed his ribs 'gin that rock there, and got his arm broke,' and then to quiet our fears, he sends forth his endless lash to play a curve or two around the ears of the prancing leaders, with a pistol-like crack that kindles the fire of the team to fury; and away they all bound making the log crowning the rampart of wall tremble and start from its place as the wheels spin round within eight inches of the dreaded brink."

Judge Hall, an English traveler, would have been able to appreciate the difficulties of which Baynard Hall wrote, for his experience of the road to Pittsburg was gained at about the same period. In the story of his travels [23] he said:

The turnpikes, which have since rendered the passes of the mountain so safe and easy were not completed, and if I found it toilsome in the extreme to accomplish my journey on horseback, you may conceive the almost insurmountable difficulties presented to weary-laden wanderers, encumbered with waggons and baggage; yet I found these roads crowded with emigrants of every description, but the majority were of the poorest class. Here I would meet a few lusty fellows, trudging it merrily along; and there a family, more embarrassed, and less cheerful; now a gang of forty or fifty souls, men, women, and children; and now a solitary pedestrian, with his oaken staff, his bottle, and his knapsack; and, once a day, a stage-load of tired travellers, dragged heavily toward the west. Sometimes I beheld a gentleman toiling along with a broken-down vehicle, and sometimes encountered the solitary horseman; here I espied the wreck of a carriage, or the remains of a meal; and there the temporary shelter which had protected the benighted stranger. At one time, beside a small stream rushing through a narrow glen, I encountered a party of about fourscore persons, with two or three waggons. They had halted to bait; the beasts were grazing among the

rocks, the men cleaving wood for fires, and boughs to erect a tenement for the hour; the women cooking or nursing their children, and the rosy boys and girls dabbling in a waterfall. When, from the summit of a mountain, or one of its precipices, where the road wound beneath my feet, appearing at intervals as far as the eye could reach, I beheld one of these large caravans, composed of half-clad beings, of every age and sex, slowly winding up the mountain path, or resting at mid-day among the rocks, I could compare them only to the gipsy bands described by foreign novelists.

At one of the most difficult passes of the mountain I met a cavalcade whose description will apply to a numerous class; they were from New England. The senior of the party was a middle-aged man, hale, well built, and decently clad. He was guiding a pair of small, lean, active horses, harnessed to a light waggon which contained the bedding and provisions of the party and a few articles of household furniture; two well brown, barefoot boys, in homespun shirts and trowsers, held the tail of the waggon, laudably endeavoring to prevent an *upset* by throwing their weight occasionally to that side which seemed to require ballast, while the father exerted his arms, voice, and whip, in urging forward his ponies. In the rear toiled the partner of his pilgrimage, conducting, like John Rodgers' wife, "nine small children and one at the breast," and exhibiting in her own person and those of her offspring ample proof that, whatever might be the character of the land to which they were hastening, that which they had left was not deficient in health or fruitfulness. Nor must I omit to mention a chubby boy of six years old, who, by sundry falls and immersions, had acquired the hue of the soil from head to foot, and though now trudging knee-deep in the mire, was craunching an apple with the most entire composure.

For many years emigrants continued to toil over the mountains. In 1835 Tyrone Power studied some of his fellow travelers to such purpose that he told of them vividly: [24]

Whilst walking up the mountains, I frequently overtook settlers moving with all their worldly goods over to the great Western valley. I generally exchanged a few words with them, and with the more communicative now and then had a considerable long talk. Most of them were small farmers and mechanics from the Northern States, who followed here in the wake of kindred or neighbours, their plan arranged and their location determined upon. One or two heads of families, however, told me they were just going to look about, and did not know rightly where they might set up.

I overtook one old couple attending a single-horse wagon up Laurel Hill; and surely, if any laurels awaited them at the summit, they were hardly enough won. The appearance of this pair attracted me as I approached the rocky platform where for a moment they had halted to breathe; the woman was a little creature, dressed in an old-fashioned flowered gown, with sleeves tight to the elbows, met by black mittens of faded silk, and a very small close bonnet of the same color. She had small brass buckles in her shoes, a cane, like those borne by running footmen, in one hand, and upon the other arm a small basket, rolled up within which lay a tabby cat with which she held a conversation in what sounded to me like broken French and English.

The man was a son of Anak in altitude, somewhat bent by years, but having a soldierlike air. His white hair was combed back and gathered behind into a thick club; he wore a long greatcoat, which, if made for him, gave testimony to a considerable falling off in his proportions, for it hung but loosely about him; had a very broad-leaved hat set jauntily on one side of his head; and supported his steps upon a sturdy stick.

When the woman had entered the wagon once more, the giant told Mr. Power about her. He had met her in France, fifty years before, when he was about to go to America. A little boy appealed to him to help him out of the country; he had no passport. On the voyage the boy turned out to be a girl, and when New York was reached the rescuer

married the rescued. For forty years they lived near Philadelphia. Their emigration in old age was due to the failure of work in the East and rumors of work in Pittsburg, but the wife had feared the journey until her husband was trodden on in an election scuffle, and his arm broken. "My poor little woman took such a horror of the little bit of mobbing we had that she would make me pull up stakes, and here we are on our last move."

When near the top of Laurel Hill on his return trip from Pittsburg Mr. Power talked with other emigrants:[25]

The extent of the present caravan made it peculiarly interesting. It consisted of five long, well-covered waggons, each drawn by eight or six horses and was attended by three or four led nags and a number of dogs of various denominations. The occupants of the waggons were women and children; the faces of the chubby rogues were all crowded in front to look upon the passing stranger, with here and there a shining ebony phiz thrust between; the chief freight appeared to consist of household furniture and agricultural implements.

By the side of these waggons first rode four or five horsemen, well mounted, who might be the principals of the party, for they were men past the meridian of life; straggling in the rear, or scattered along the edges of the forest, walked eight or nine younger men, rough-and-ready-looking fellows, each with his rifle in his hand. Wild pigeons abounded along the cover-edge, and the sharp crack which every now and then rang through the air of morning told that the hunters were dealing upon them.

From the construction of the waggons, as well as because their owners evinced no inclination either to hold communion or exchange civilities with a passing wayfarer, which no Southerner ever fails to do, I concluded this to be a party of New England men, who, abandoning their worn-out native fields, were pushing on for the "far West" with the lightness of heart consequent on the surety of reaping a brave harvest from a soil which withholds abundance from none who possess hearts and arms to ask it.

Brave men and women were these who toiled over the Alleghenies, determined to endure trials and hardships without complaints, for the sake of the homes they sought to win, and—many of them must have had this larger thought —for the sake of the future of their country.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

(See Bibliography)

1. "Early Chapters in the Development of the Patowmack Route to the West," p. 73.
2. "The Making of the Ohio Valley States," p. 229.
3. "A Year's Residence in the United States of America," Part III, p. 357.
4. "Memorable Days in America," p. 163.
5. "An Englishman's Pocket Note Book in 1828," p. 333.
6. "Adventures of Zenas Leonard," p. 297.
7. "The Wilderness Road" (Filson Club), p. 16.
8. "Early Settlement of the Ohio Valley," p. 4.
9. "John Filson" (Filson Club), p. 46.
10. "Journal from Philadelphia to Kentucky, 1787-8," p. 182.
11. "Journal of Colonel Israel Shreve," p. 742.
12. "Journals and Letters," pp. 25, 27, 29.
13. "Travels to the West of the Allegheny Mountains," p. 34.
14. "Topographical Description of the Territory of North America," p. 158.
15. "A Journey to Ohio in 1810," p. 2.
16. "John H. B. Latrobe and His Times," p. 46.
17. "Notes on a Journey in America," pp. 28, 32, ff.
18. "Letters from Illinois," p. 18.
19. "A Narrative of a Journey of Five Thousand Miles," p. 189, ff.
20. "A Year's Residence in the United States of America," pp. 322, 362.
21. "Letters from America," p. 41.
22. "The New Purchase," pp. 3, 15, 17, 20.
23. "Letters from the West," p. 310.
24. "Impressions of America," Vol. I, p. 300.
25. Ditto, p. 331.

CHAPTER THREE: FLOATING DOWN THE OHIO AND MISSISSIPPI

THE OHIO

Lo, our waiting ark is freighted;
  In its depths of oak and pine
All our household treasures gathered,—
  Thine, my humble friend, and mine.

Here the laughter-loving children
  Gaze, with wonder-filling eyes,
With the maidens, whose emotions,
  Like the waters, fall and rise.

Here are youths whose westward fancies
  Claim the forest-sheltered game;
Here are men with soul and sinew
  Which no wilderness can tame.

Here are matrons full of courage,—
  Worthy these the pioneers,—
And the patriarch lends a sanction
  In the wisdom of his years.

Ax and team, and plow and sickle,
  In the hold are gathered all;
And, methinks, I hear the woodland,
  Mid their thundering echoes, fall.

. . . . . .

Draw the foot-board, loose the cables,
  Free the wharf and man the oars;
Give the broad keel to the river,
  Bid adieu to crowded shores.

—Thomas Buchanan Read.

I. IN PERILS OF WATERS

The river is up, the channel is deep,
The winds blow high and strong,
The flash of the oars, the stroke we keep,
As we row the old boat along,
Down the O-H-I-O!
—Old Boating Song.

For two generations the Ohio river was the great emigrant highway between the East and the country west of Pittsburg and Wheeling. From Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and New England the pilgrims thronged in ever-increasing numbers.

Until 1811 transportation on the river was by means of keelboats, barges, and flatboats. The keelboat has been described as being "long and slender, sharp fore and aft, with a narrow gangway just within the gunwale, for the boatmen as they poled up the stream," when they were unable to use their oars. The flatboat was "an unwieldly box, and was broken up, for the lumber it contained, on its arrival at its destination." Of course it was useful only in going downstream. Many of the early emigrants loaded their goods on flatboats, traveled by water as far as possible, then sold this means of transportation, and completed their journey on land.

Long before the real beginning of emigration John Jennings went from Fort Pitt to the Illinois country by way of the Ohio. In his Journal [1] he told of the trip. Extracts are illuminating:

March 9, 1766. This morning at Seven O'clock left Long Island [ten miles from Pittsburg] and proceeded down the River, with the following Batteaus, Viz.: The

Ohio Packet, the Beaver, the Dublin, The Good Intent, And The Otter.

March 10. At Twelve, Mr. Winston hailed the Boats, to bring too, in a threatning manner, two of the Boats made for him, but Capt. Long ordered them to proceed down the River, & put on shore for him, not chusing to refuse his coming on board, as he observed some Indian Women, & did not know but there might be Men conceal'd, to do us an injury. . . .

March 18. At eight passed some Warriors' Cabbins; these are known by a Tree having the Bark strip'd of all round, about four feet from the Ground, with particular marks Cut on it, denoting what Nation they are, & their good or bad success in War, which is known by the Indians who happen to pass that way.

Saturday 29. [On the Mississippi.] Passed several Islands & a great quantity of Trees in the River, on those Islands are a great many Stumps of small Trees, which the Beaver's Eat through, & when the Tree falls, they either then Eat the Bark of the Top part of it, or else drag it into the River, & carry it to their holes to Eat, or build with.

April 1. A very Large Beace Tree fell into the River, providentially we had passed it about ten yards before it fell, or in all probability the Boat would have been Crushed to pieces, & every Soul on board perished.

April 5. At Eight heard a gun fire, & saw the St. George's Colours hoisted. . . . At Ten O'Clock came up to them at the Mouth of the Kuskuskes River. . . . Proceeded up the River, & . . . arrived at the Village. . . . It hath a Number of houses, some large, but meanly built, with good Lotts behind them, for Gardens, but make little use of them, the inhabitants in general being very indolent.

From Kuskuskes the leader of the expedition went on to Fort Chartris "by Land in a Calash, a very ruff immitation of our chairs."

One of the early travelers who left a record of his journey down the Ohio was George Rogers Clark, who in later years became famous by reason of his campaign against Forts Kaskaskia and Vincennes, in Illinois and

Indiana. The tales of other venturesome explorers of the West proved of such interest to him that, when he was twenty years old he crossed the mountains and made his way down the Ohio, where he remained a few months. One of his companions, David Jones, kept a journal of the trip. Of this journal the following are extracts:[2]

I left Fort Pitt on Tuesday, June 9, 1772, in company with George Rogers Clark, a young gentleman from Virginia, who with several others inclined to make a tour of this new world. We traveled by water in a canoe. . . .

. . . Instead of feathers my bed was gravel stones, by the river side. From Fort Pitt to this place [Grave Creek] we were only in one place where white people live. Our lodging was on the banks of the river, which at first seemed not to suit me, but afterwards it became more natural. . . .

. . . We arrived at the Kanawha. . . . We went up this stream about ten miles and out on every side to view the land and to obtain provisions. My interpreter killed several deer, and a stately buffalo bull. . . .

On a later trip Mr. Clark made a location of land near Wheeling, on which he built a cabin. For a season he spent his time surveying, hunting, fishing and caring for his land.

On January 9, 1773, he wrote to his brother Jonathan:

I embrace ye opportunity by Mr. Jarrot to let you know that I am in good health, hoping that this will find you in the same. . . . I am settled on my land with good plenty of provisions. . . . The country settles very fast, and corn is in some parts 7s. 6d. per bushel, but I have a great plenty. The people are settling as low as ye Sioto river, 368 below Fort Pitt. Land has raised almost as dear here as below. . . . I get a good deal of cash by Surveying on this river.

Settlements on the Ohio between Pittsburg and Louisville were becoming fairly common when the author of Taylor's History of Ten Baptist Churches passed, in 1783,

the site of the Clark farm near Wheeling, on his way from Kentucky to Virginia. In giving the account of his trip [3] he said:

We took water at Redstone, and for want of a better opening, I paid for a passage in a lonely, ill-fixed boat of strangers. The river being low, this lonesome boat was about seven weeks before she landed at Beargrass. Not a soul was then settled on the Ohio between Wheeling and Louisville, a space of five hundred or six hundred miles and not one hour, day or night in safety; though it was now winter, not a soul in all Beargrass settlement was in safety but by being in a fort. I then meditated travelling about eighty miles to Craig's Station, on Gilbert's creek, in Lincoln County.

We set out in a few days; nearly all I owned was then at stake. I had three horses, two of them were packed, the other my wife rode, with as much lumber besides as the beast could bear. I had four black people, one man, and three Smaller ones. The pack horses were led, one by myself, the other by my man. The trace, what there was, being so narrow and bad, we had no choice but to wade through all the mud, rivers and creeks we came to. Salt River, with a number of its large branches, we had to deal with often; these waters being flush, we must often wade to our middle. . . . These struggles often made us forget the dangers we were in from Indians. . . . After six days painful travel of this kind, we arrived at Craig's Station a little before Christmas, and about three months after our start from Virginia.

In 1785 John Filson went from Wilmington, Delaware, in company with a man named Jones and his family. The land journey has already been pictured in Chapter II. The trip down the Ohio was described thus: [4]

On Sunday, May 27, the wagon in which the party had traveled was abandoned at Pittsburgh for the more easy-going flatboat, better known as the Kentucky boat. The party took passage in one of these arks, loaded with horses,

cattle, groceries, dry goods, hardware, farming implements, and human beings bound for the Falls of the Ohio. Along the channel of "the beautiful river," severing the dark forests on either side, like the zig-zag lightning's path through the black clouds, they floated on the gentle current. The huge old sycamores and cottonwoods that had sentineled the wild banks for untold years stood at the water's edge and leaned over the stream and beheld their wide-spreading arms and giant forms mirrored in the crystal waters. Every thing along the shore indicated the uninterrupted abode of the wild animals of the forest, except here and there, upon some rich bottom raised above the vernal floods, peeped from the rank foliage solitary mounds that had been reared so long ago by human beings that their builders had passed away without a tradition, a history, or a name. The haughty buffalo, and the timid deer, disdaining the smaller streams that paid tribute to the Ohio, came to the margin of the main river to slake their thirst, and there was nothing in all the vast solitude to remind one of civilized life except the rude vessel that floated along the current. On the thirteenth day after leaving Pittsburgh the boat was moored in the mouth of Beargrass Creek.

Later in the year of John Filson's own voyage, Daniel Trabue started out with his family from Virginia to Kentucky. Here is a part of the story of their pilgrimage:

We did intend to start to Kentucky the first of September, but we did not get off so soon. Captain John Watkins, his family, and his son-in-law James Locket went with us. . . . We had 5 or 6 white men, and 12 or 15 negro men, and altogether our company was above 70 souls. We went on to Redstone, and got a large boat, which was very heavily loaded with all our horses, and our carriages, goods, and our people.

Uncle Bartholomew Du Puy, with 3 of his sons, and a number of his negroes, and several other families, all started down the River at the same time. I think there were five boats, and in all 200 or 300 souls. I thought there was great danger of the Indians molesting us, but as we had

many guns we agreed to stick together. We thought the water was sufficiently high for our boats, and that we could go in safety, but after we left the settlement we kept running aground, as our boat was loaded very heavily. We went some distance below the Kanawha to an island, which is called the Dead Man's Island.

It was agreed by Mr. Locket and myself that he would steer the boat and I would take the front and Direct him by a wave of the hand which way to steer. We kept exactly after another Boat when on a sudden our Boat stove against the end of a log that was under water; the Boat made a sudden stop, and all the horses and people fell Down. I observed the boat was still, and the water ran as swift as a Mill Tail. I saw that a plank was bursted at my end, and the water was coming in very rapidly, as we were 40 or 50 feet from shore, I hollowed out to Mr. Locket and waved my hand to turn his end to the shore.

He did so, and it took several strokes with the assistance of another hand before they could turn it. When it got into that position I called out for them to jump. Some of the men, who were out first, held the boat. I hollowed for the women and children to go to the end, and jump out; and for the men, black and white, to throw out the things. My end began to sink very soon, and I, and another man, cut the ropes that held the horses. As the boat sank the horses swam out. This all took only three minutes.

The people were all saved, but we lost considerable of our goods. If the hind end had turned the other way, it was thought that most of the women and children would have been drowned. We were thankful that A Kind Providence had saved us, although we saw a great many things swimming off, there appeared to be not a murmur of regret, but all were thankful that it was no worse.

The reason the other Boats escaped, and ours struck the log, was because our boat was a great deal the heaviest loaded, and sank deeper in the water. The other boats stopped, and came with their canoes to our assistance, as quickly as they could. They caught some few of our things that were still near. We apprehended great danger of Indians, so we moved the women and children in canoes to

the Island, with all our things. The same night all the Boats encamped together.

The next morning we examined our boat, and took out all the iron things. She then floated, but was too much injured to mend. The Owner of the other Boats agreed with us that all the horses should be sent by land, and we then might have room in their boats. We were 21 days on the River, three times as long as we had expected. Our Provisions were scarce, and we often went ashore with our canoes, and killed Turkey which was plenty.

We had a hearty laugh at one of Captain Watkins negroes who said, "It will do very well, Master, if we have plenty of Turkeys, for we will never die; but if we have bread and bacon, too, we will live a heap longer."

We got all safe to Limestone, and landed; after waiting several days, the men with the horses arrived, bringing the bad news that the Indians had fired on them, and that several of the horses had been killed. Some of the people went on, with parts of their families and goods, and sent back for the rest.

We all settled in Fayette, now Woodford County; I settled on Grear's Creek, near Kentucky River. We thought that a safe place as several people lived across the River, and we expected that it would soon be better settled. Next year Brother Edward Trabue, and his family came out, and settled on the Fork, or cleft of the Kentucky River. My mother, Uncle John Du Puy, Uncle Bert Du Puy, and Uncle James Du Puy all settled in the same neighborhood.

The Indians soon became more troublesome, and the people who lived across the River moved over to our side. The Indians not only killed the people on the other side of the River, but also several in our neighborhood. We pursued the Indians many times, but they were too cunning for us, and we could not succeed in overtaking them.

When Mrs. Mary De Wees floated down the river from Pittsburg to Kentucky, in the winter of 1787-1788, she was delayed on McKee's Island, near her starting point, while she waited for high water. On November 17 her

party was encouraged by the rising river to make a fresh start.

Of the experiences of the trip she wrote:[6]

November 20. Just as the day broke got aground on a Sand bar, at the Beach Bottom. Just at that time a small Kentucky Boat that was ashore endeavoured to alarm us by fireing of a gun and accosting us in the Indian tongue, but our people could just discern the boat which quieted our fears.

November 23. . . . At dark came to Bilwell, a place founded by Mr. Tilton, late of Philadelphia. 'Tis the most delightful situation I have seen on the Ohio; there are about a dozen snug little cabins built on the bank, in which families reside, with each a field of corn and a garden, with a small fort to defend them from the Savages. This settlement began about 2 years ago, distant from Fort Pitt 200 miles, on the Virginia shore.

November 24. . . . The variety of deer, ducks, turkeys and geese, with which this country abounds, keeps us always on the look out, and adds much to the beauty of scenes about us. Between the hours of six and eleven, we have seen twelve deer, some feeding in the grass patches that are on the Bottoms, some drinking at the river side, while others at the sight of us bound through the woods with amazing swiftness.

On November 26 Mrs. De Wees landed at Limestone, Kentucky. On November 28 she set out from Limestone for Lexington. On November 29 she camped on North Fork.

The journal continued:

We made our bed at the fire, the night being very cold, and the howling of the wolves, together with its being the most dangerous part of the road, kept us from enjoying much repose that night.

January 29. I have this day reached South Elkhorn and am much pleased with it. 'Tis a snug little Cabin about 9 miles from Lexington, on a pretty ascent, surrounded by sugar trees, a beautiful pond a little distance from the

house, with an excellent spring not far from the door. I have enjoyed more happiness the few days I have been here than I have experienced these four or five years past. I have my little family together, and am in full expectations of seeing better days.

Up to this time the movement of emigrants down the Ohio had been spasmodic, but with the beginning of Marietta, the first well-organized settlement on the upper Ohio below Pittsburg, emigration became steadier and the volume increased.

The first settlers went to Marietta in 1788, five years after 288 officers of the Revolutionary army petitioned Congress that the lands appropriated for the soldiers in 1786 might be located in territory west of Pennsylvania, south of Lake Erie, and along the Ohio.

When General Rufus Putnam forwarded the petition to Washington, he urged that it be granted, in order that "the country between Lake Erie and the Ohio might be filled with inhabitants, and the faithful subjects of the United States so established on the waters of the Ohio and the lakes, as to banish forever the idea of our Western Territory falling under the dominion of any European power." [7]

Action by Congress was delayed, but General Putnam did not lose heart. In January, 1786, with Rufus Tupper, he called a meeting of officers and soldiers and others to form an Ohio Company. The meeting was held in Boston March 1, 1786, and the Ohio Company of Associates was duly formed. It was agreed to raise a fund to purchase from Congress, for purposes of settlement, the Western lands which Congress had been asked to give them.

On July 27, 1787, a tract of 1,500,000 acres on the Ohio River, between the Scioto and the Muskingum rivers was sold to the Company, at one dollar per acre. Half of the amount was paid down. When, later, it became impossible to pay the remainder, Congress gave a measure of relief.

The first emigrants to go to the new lands set out from Danvers, Massachusetts, December 1, 1787, under the

guidance of General Putnam, while a second party started from Hartford, Connecticut, January 1, 1788. The first party reached the Youghiogheny January 23, 1788, while the second, making better time, joined them on February 14. There a barge, called the *Mayflower,* was built, forty-six feet long, and twelve feet wide. A cabin was provided for the women of the party, and an awning was stretched. The men propelled the boat with ten oars.

On April 1, the voyage to the Ohio was begun, and on April 7 the party reached the mouth of the Muskingum. The barge was moored to the bank, opposite Fort Harmar.

Upon one of the old mounds near the bank the settlers built an enclosure of logs with a log fort at each corner. Within were the cabins occupied by the families. The fort and the enclosure were called The Campus Martius. On July 2, 1788, the name Marietta was given to the settlement, in honor of Marie Antoinette, queen of France.

Events followed rapidly. On July 4 the first celebration of the national holiday took place with great enthusiasm. On July 17 the territorial government was set up, with General St. Clair as governor. On July 26 Washington County was formed.

By the close of 1788 one hundred and thirty-two men had settled at Marietta. The influx of settlers encouraged the Ohio Company to start other settlements farther down the river.

Next to Marietta, the most important settlement of the year was Losantiville,* which later became Cincinnati. The

*The derivation of this strange name is explained thus: *L* stands for the Licking River; *os* is mouth, *anti* is opposite, and *ville,* of course, is village. Losantiville, therefore, means "The village opposite the mouth of the Licking River."

William H. Venable has told in rhyme of the founding of the town. Six of his stanzas might well be quoted:

John Filson was a pedagogue—
A pioneer was he;
I know not what his nation was
Nor what his pedigree.

pioneers who selected the location were led by Matthias Denman of New Jersey. The same year, John Cleve Symmes, Chief Justice of New Jersey, laid out the town of Columbia, which also became a part of Cincinnati. In 1789 Fort Washington was built to protect the settlements near by. Later Anna Symmes married, against her father's wish, Captain William Henry Harrison, an officer at the fort, who later became President of the United States.

One of the emigrants of 1788 was Colonel John May, who stopped for a season at Pittsburg, on his way from Boston to Marietta. With his party he rested on the shore opposite the junction of the Allegheny and the Monongahela. While there he wrote: [8]

Yesterday two boats for Kentucky hailed us at our landing, having on board twenty-nine whites, twenty-four negroes, nine dogs, twenty-three horses, cows, hogs, etc., besides provision and furniture. Several have passed today equally large.

John Filson and companions bold
A frontier village planned,
In forest wild, on sloping hills,
By fair Ohio's strand.

John Filson from their languages
With pedant skill did frame
The novel word Losantiville
To be the new town's name.

Said Filson: "Comrades, hear my words:
Ere three score years have flown
Our town will be a city vast."
Loud laughed Bob Pattison.

Still John exclaimed, with prophet-tongue,
"A city fair and proud,
The Queen of Cities in the West!"
Matt Denman laughed aloud.

Losantiville, the prophet's word,
The poet's hope fulfills,—
She sits a stately queen to-day,
Amid her royal hills.

While waiting here word came of the capture by savages near Marietta, of three "Kentuck boats." But the news did not cool the ardor of the pioneers.

On May 14 General Harrison, from Fort Harmar, with several others, called on the May party. "They crossed the river in the *Congress* barge, rowed by twelve men, in white uniform and caps. This barge is fifty-two feet long."

Colonel May wrote further:

On May 19 a Mr. Medcalf, of Dedham, came here, wishing to get a passage down the river. He being out of provisions and money, I took him into my family.

Not until May 24 did the opportunity come to start down the Ohio, in a boat forty-two feet long and twelve feet wide, which drew two and one half feet and was of forty-five tons burden. The voyage was prosperous.

Soon after reaching their destination on the Muskingum, two long boats arrived from the Falls of the Ohio, with about one hundred soldiers and officers. While coming up the river they were fired upon by a strong party of Indians led by a white man. Two of the party were killed.

On June 30 Colonel May wrote:

Poor Dr. M. out of provisions and no money. Had pity on him and took him into my family, although it was quite large enough before. I put powder-horn and shot-bag onto him, and a gun in his hand, with a bottle of grog by his side, and told him to live on my cornfield, and keep off squirrels and crows.

Colonel May and his family continued to live on his "Kentucky ship," as he called it, while his people were hewing timber for his log house. He was still on board the vessel when Governor St. Clair arrived, July 9. "This is, in a sense, the birthday of the Western World," Colonel May wrote, triumphantly.

The magnitude of the movement down the Ohio at this period has been described thus:[9]

An eye-witness stated that between November 13 and December 22 of 1785, thirty-nine boats, with an average of ten souls in each, went down the Ohio to the Falls; and there were others which stopped at some of the settlements farther up the river. As time went on the number of immigrants who adopted this method of travel increased; larger boats were used, and the immigrants took more property with them. In the last half of the year 1787 there passed by Fort Harmar 146 boats, with 3196 souls, 1371 horses, 165 wagons, 191 cattle, 245 sheep and 24 hogs. In the year ending in November, 1788, 967 boats, carrying 18,370 souls with 7986 horses, 2372 cows, 1110 sheep, and 646 wagons, went down the Ohio.

II. BY FLATBOAT AND KEEL BOAT

Heigh-ho! boatmen, row,
A-floating down the Ohio!
The boatmen dance—the boatmen sing—
The boatmen are up to everything—
Dance, boatmen, dance—dance, boatmen, dance!
We'll dance all night till broad daylight,
And go home with the gals in the morning!
Heigh-ho, boatmen, row!
A-floating down the Ohio!

Among the rich stories of adventure written at this period is the account left by Ephraim Cutler,[10] son of Manasseh Cutler, one of those responsible for the Ohio Company, who left his Connecticut home for Marietta on June 15, 1795. The trip was made on the advice of the family physician, for the benefit of Mrs. Cutler's failing health. Friends told her she could not survive the terrible journey, but she insisted that she could. She not only survived, but the experience restored her health.

Most of Mr. Cutler's property had been invested in three shares of land in the Ohio Company's purchase, and at the beginning of the journey he had on hand only sufficient money for his expenses. The cost of the trip proved to be about two hundred dollars.

When Mr. and Mrs. Cutler started on "their hazardous journey and perilous enterprise," there were with them their four children, aged eight, six, three and one. On the way they were joined by three other families.

After driving to the Monongahela in a wagon drawn by two horses and a yoke of oxen, Mr. Cutler waited long enough for the building of a small Kentucky flat boat, sufficient to take the four families down to Marietta.

On this boat the women and children embarked, while

Mr. Cutler and Colonel Putnam, one of his companions, took the horses across country to the Ohio.

The boat's progress was delayed by low water; many times it grounded on the bars. On some days they advanced but three or four miles. When the party was near Beaver Creek the one-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Cutler died and was buried on the Pennsylvania bank. Soon after Wheeling was left behind the eight-year-old daughter died and was buried "in the dreary wilderness, far from the habitation of any civilized being."

Of other disasters Mr. Cutler told in his journal:

As the boat was lying near the shore, Mrs. Cutler, in attempting to pass to the land on an oar or plank, fell and striking her side against the edge of the boat, broke two of her ribs and injured herself seriously. My own health, notwithstanding the great exposure from being very often in the water, continued good until about the time this accident occurred, when I was attacked with dysentery, and much weakened before the boat landed at Marietta, which was on the morning of September 18, 1795.

The river journey required thirty-one days, and more than three months had been spent on the way from Connecticut.

After a season in Marietta, the Cutlers moved to Waterford, going up the Muskingum in a canoe. Here they occupied half of a log cabin, being the thirty-third family in the settlement. There they saw few people until the discovery of a salt spring forty miles from Waterford, at what is now Chandlersville. The fame of the spring became so great that, after the opening of Zane's Road, from Wheeling to Maysville, Kentucky, as authorized by Congress in 1796, many travelers left this road either at Zanesville or at St. Clairsville, and sought the spring, stopping on the way at Waterford. The road from Waterford to the spring was laid out by Mr. Cutler. This was the first of many roads for which he was responsible.

Ezekiel Forman, of New Jersey, brother of General David Forman, who commanded the New Jersey troops at the battle of Germantown, set out in 1789 with his family and sixty or more negroes, for Natchez, Mississippi, where he planned to settle under Spanish authority. Major Samuel S. Forman, Ezekiel's nephew, accompanied the party.

The horses and wagon were sold at Pittsburg, and the emigrants embarked on a tobacco boat for Natchez.

Major Forman wrote of the trip:[11]

These boats were flat-bottomed, and boarded over the top, and appeared like floating houses. Uncle's boat was a seventy-foot keel boat, decked over, with a cabin for lodging purposes, but too low to stand up erect. The beds and bedding lay on the floor, and the inside was lined with plank to prevent the Indians from penetrating through with their balls, should they attack us. We had a large quantity of dry goods, and a few were paid and bartered in payment for boats and provisions. . . . Both boats were armed with rifles, pistols, etc. It being in Indian war time, all boats descending that long river, of about eleven hundred miles, were liable to be attacked every hour by a merciless foe, oftentimes led on by renegade whites. . . .

Our keel-boat took the lead. These boats are guided by oars; seldom used, except the steering oar, or when passing islands, as the current goes about six or seven miles an hour. As the waters were now high the current was perhaps eight or nine miles an hour. Before day-break next morning we had a narrow escape from destruction, from our ignorance of river navigation. We had an anchor and cable attached to our keel-boat. The cable was made fast to small posts over the forecastle. When it began to grow dark, the anchor was thrown over, in hopes of holding us fast till morning, while the other boats were to tie up to trees along the river bank.

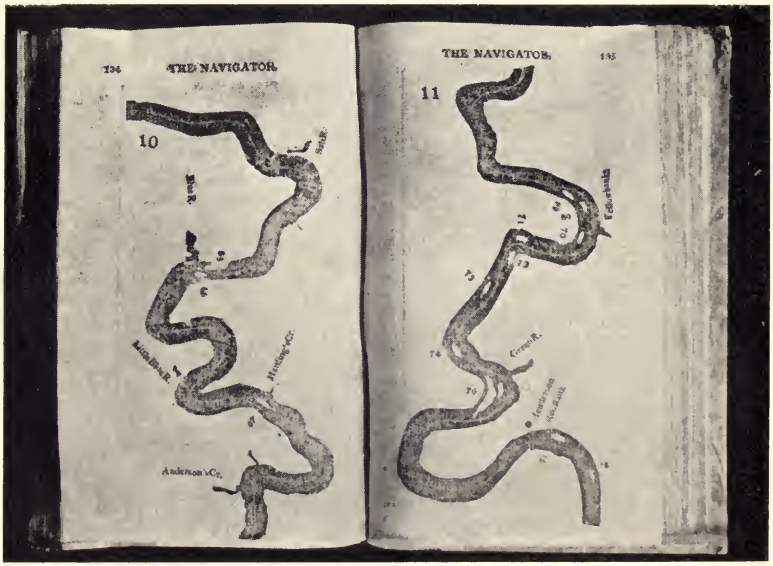
As soon as the anchor fastened itself in the river bottom, the boat gave a little lurch, or side motion, when the cable tore away all the frame-work around the deck, causing a great alarm. Several little black children were on deck at

From an old print

FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER

Photographed for this volume from a painting in the possession of the Ohio Historical Society

GENERAL PUTNAM LANDING AT MARIETTA



From "The Navigator," 1811

TWO SECTIONS OF THE OHIO RIVER

From Schoolcraft's "Historical Conditions and Prospects of the Indians in the United States"

OHIO RIVER FROM THE SUMMIT OF GRAVE CREEK MOUND

From "National Gallery of American Landscape"

WABASH RIVER, NEAR VINCENNES, INDIANA

Photographed from painting in Federal Building, Wheeling, West Virginia, by Nicoll's Art Store

MC COLLOCH'S LEAP, NEAR WHEELING, 1777

Pursued by Indians, who had hemmed him in on three sides on Wheeling Hill, McColloch dashed down the precipitous fourth side to safety. The Indians did not dare to follow.

Photograph by the United States Forest Service

ON THE SCENT OF THE EMIGRANTS

the time, and as it had now become quite dark, it could not be ascertained in the excitement of the moment, whether any of them had been thrown into the water. Fortunately none were missing. During our confusion, Captain Osmun's boat passed ours, a few minutes after the accident, and we soon passed him, he hailing us, saying that he was entangled in the top of a large tree, which had caved into the river, and requested the small row-boat to assist him. . . . Osmun got clear of the tree without injury. . . .

Some distance above Fort Washington, the Scioto river empties into the Ohio. Near this river was a cave, which the whites had not discovered till after Harmar's defeat. Here the Indians would sally out against boats ascending the Ohio. A canoe passed on the day before we passed the Scioto, which had been fired into at that point, one man having been shot through the shoulder, another through the calf of the leg, while the third escaped unhurt.

The writer disembarked at Louisville in January, 1790, because the river was full of ice. He took a house in the village and opened the front part as a store. There he sold goods brought from Pittsburg, and took tobacco in payment. Louisville at this time had about sixty dwelling houses. The writer stayed here to tend his store; the others went on.

An adventure which befell them soon after leaving Louisville was narrated by Major Forman:

While Uncle Foreman and party were sojourning in Louisville there was, it appears, a white man there, who learned the names of Ezekiel Forman and Captain Osmun, their place of destination, and all about them. This fellow was a decoyer, who lived among the Indians, and whose business it was to lure boats ashore for purposes of murder and robbery. At some point below the mouth of the Tennessee, this renegade saw the boats approaching, ran on the beech imploring, upon his bended knees, that Mr. Forman, calling him by name, would come ashore and take him on board, as he had just escaped from the Indians. Mr. Foreman began to steer for his relief, when Captain Osmun,

who was a little way in the rear, hailed Uncle, warning him to keep in the middle of the stream, as he saw Indians in hiding behind trees along the bank.

In 1791 Captain William Hubbell had a similar experience:[12]

He procured a flat-boat on the Monongahela; nine men, three women, and eight children were on board. As they floated down the Ohio they discovered signs of Indians, and kept watch night and day. One morning about daylight a voice from the shore was heard begging to be taken on board; Captain Hubbell refused to land. The Indians, seeing their decoy was unsuccessful, attacked the flat-boat; twenty-five or thirty approached in canoes. Firing commenced on both sides. The lock of Captain Hubbell's rifle was shot off by a bullet from an Indian gun, but he coolly seized a fire-brand and fired his piece with fatal effect. His right arm was disabled, but he continued to fight, using pistols and hurling billets of wood. The Indians were driven off; but of the men only two remained unhurt, and three were killed. After the fight one of the children—a little boy—asked to have a bullet taken out of his head. On examination it was found that a bullet was indeed lodged in his scalp. "That ain't all," said he, showing a wound in his arm which had broken a bone. He had made no outcry, because the children had been ordered to keep quiet. The horses were all killed but one. In a space five feet square, on the side of the cabin, one hundred and twenty-two bullet holes were counted.

The loneliness of the river banks was emphasized by Francis Baily,[13] an Englishman, who floated down the Ohio and the Mississippi in 1796-7. On the Ohio he noted scattered settlements, but, when he passed into the Mississippi, for days he saw no one. Finally he wrote:

I could scarcely imagine that I was on the surface of a river which had flowed 3000 miles, and scarcely beheld the face of a man, much less washed the feet of his habitation, and had barely 200 miles further to go ere it would be

forever lost in the great body of the ocean. This appearance of cultivation I afterward found was not extended into the interior of the country, but merely on the borders of the river; for all the country behind these settlements is still overgrown with woods and possessed by wild beasts; and there is seldom an instance of there being one settlement formed at the back of another, except in the immediate vicinity of New Orleans.

A few days later the traveler ventured on a bit of prophecy. After telling of a man who built a schooner "at the head of the Ohio and actually navigated it down that river and the Mississippi, and sent it round by sea to Philadelphia," where it became a coastwise commerce carrier, he said:

If we may be allowed to anticipate a century or two, we may fancy we see a fleet of merchantmen doubling the cape at the mouth of the Ohio and bringing up that delightful river (where nothing is now heard but the croaking of bull frogs, the howling of wolves and wild beasts) the produce of every climate under the sun.

The experience of Josiah Espy in the country bordering on the Ohio river were somewhat more varied than those of other travelers. In 1805, he made a trip to visit his mother and brothers and sisters who had emigrated, with Mr. Espy, from Bedford, Pennsylvania, in 1787.[14]

On July 11, 1805, he arrived at Wheeling, by way of Pittsburg. On July 15 he sailed in the keel boat *Mary*. On July 25 he landed at Columbia. On July 26 he went up the Little Miami river seventeen miles, to the home of his brother, Thomas.

After a few weeks he started for Kentucky. On September 4 he reached Cincinnati, which at that time contained about two hundred dwelling houses, "many of them elegant brick buildings."

On September 7 he crossed into Kentucky and reached Lexington September 9.

Lexington is the largest and most wealthy town in Kentucky, and, indeed, west of the Allegheny Mountains, he wrote. I have been in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and in Frederick Town, Maryland, but in neither of these places was there the same bustle or appearance of business. In fact, the Main Street of Lexington has all the appearance of Market Street in Philadelphia on a busy day.

I would suppose it contains about five hundred dwelling-houses, many of them elegant and three stories high. About thirty brick buildings were then raising, and I have little doubt but that in a few years it will rival not only in wealth, but population, the most populous inland town in the Atlantic States.

On September 22 he crossed over to Indiana Territory, near the Falls of the Ohio. He was interested to note how the surrounding country was settling rapidly by emigrants from Kentucky and the middle states.

At the close of his diary he made these observations:

The emigration to the state of Ohio at this time is truly astonishing. From my own personal observation, compared with the opinion of some gentlemen I have consulted, I have good reason to conclude that during the present year from twenty thousand to thirty thousand souls have entered the state for the purpose of making it their future residence.

These are chiefly from Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Jersey, Maryland, Kentucky and Tennessee, but on inquiry you will find some from every state in the union.

The emigrants from Kentucky, Tennessee and the Southern states are chiefly composed of those who are either opposed to slavery, or are unable to purchase slaves. Consequently, this class of people are daily increasing in Ohio. The expectation of the few who wish the introduction of slavery there can never be realized.

The Indiana territory was settled first under the same charter as the state of Ohio, prohibiting the admission of slaves, but the genius of a majority of the people ordering otherwise (the southern climate, no doubt, having its influence), the legislature of that territory, during the last

session, passed a law permitting a partial introduction of slavery. This circumstance will check the emigration of farmers who do their own labor, while the slave owners of the Southern states and Kentucky will be encouraged to remove thither; consequently the state of society there will be altogether different from that of Ohio. Its manners and laws will assimilate more and more to those of Virginia and Kentucky, while Ohio will, in these respects, more closely imitate Pennsylvania and the middle states.*

In traveling through this immense and beautiful country, an idea mingled with melancholy emotions almost continually presented itself to my mind, which was this:— that before many years the people of that great tract of country would separate themselves from the Atlantic states and establish an independent empire. The peculiar situation of the country and the nature of men will gradually lead to this crisis; but what will be the proximate cause producing this great effect is yet in the womb of time. Perhaps some of us may live to see it.

When the inhabitants of that immense territory will themselves independent, force from the Atlantic states to restrain them would be madness and folly. It cannot be prevented.

One emigrant, Joseph Hough, who floated down the Ohio a number of times, was attracted to the Ohio territory, rather than to the slave territory farther down the river. His journey by keel boat required thirty-nine days, though he had six men to help him. The reason for the slow voyage he indicated as follows:[15]

The river was then as low as had ever been known on many of the ripples in the deepest channel, if channel it could be called, when there was scarcely a foot of water. My boat drew one foot and a half, after taking out such articles as we could carry over the ripple in a large canoe, which was the only kind of lighter we could procure. Consequently we had to scrape out channels at the low ripples of sufficient width and depth to float our boat. We usually

* This law was repealed December 14, 1810.

found out the deepest water on the ripple and all hands would engage in making the channel. When we passed such a ripple, we reloaded our goods and proceeded on to the next, where the same labors had to be performed and the same exposure endured. The extent of the labor which had to be performed in order to pass our boat can be understood when I state that we were frequently detained three days at one of the worst ripples.

Of his first trip he wrote:

I left Cincinnati in December, 1808, with five flat boats, all loaded with produce. At that time there were but few settlers on the Ohio river below the present city of Louisville. The cabins were few and far between, and there were only two small villages between Louisville and the mouth of the Ohio. One was Henderson, known then by the name of Red Banks; the other was Shawneetown. The latter was a village of a few cabins and was used as a landing place for the salt works on the Saline river, back of the village. The banks of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the Ohio to Natchez, were still more sparsely settled. New Madrid, a very small village, was the first settlement below the mouth of the Ohio. There were a few cabins at Little Prairies, a cabin opposite to where Memphis now is, and on the lower end of the bluff on which that city is built there was a stockade fort called Fort Pickering, garrisoned by a company of rangers. Cabins were to be seen at the mouth of White river, at Point Chico, and at Walnut Hills, two miles above where the city of Vicksburg now is. From this place to Natchez there were cabins at distances from ten to twenty miles apart.

The whole country bordering on the Mississippi, from the mouth of the Ohio to Natchez, might be regarded as an almost unbroken wilderness. The Indians seldom visited the banks, except at a few points where the river approached the high land.

The bands of robbers who had infested the lower parts of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers had not been entirely dispersed, and were yet much dreaded by the merchant

navigators of those rivers, so that the men on the boats were well armed, and during the night, when lying at the shore in the wilderness, a sentinel was kept in order to prevent surprise.

John J. Audubon, the naturalist, made a voyage down the Ohio in the same year, 1808. He landed at Henderson, Kentucky. Of the town and the home he made there he said:[16]

When I first landed at Henderson in Kentucky, my family, like the village, was quite small. The latter consisted of six or eight houses, the former of my wife, myself and a young child. Few as the houses were, we fortunately found one empty. It was a log cabin, not a log house; but as better could not be had, we were pleased. The country around was thinly peopled, and all purchasable provisions rather scarce; but our neighbors were friendly, and we had brought with us flour and bacon-hams. . . . The woods were amply stocked with game; the river with fish; and now and then the hoarded sweets of the industrious bees were brought from some hollow tree to our little table. Our child's cradle was our richest piece of furniture, our guns and fishing lines our most serviceable implements. . . .

The naturalist waxed poetical on the occasion of another trip down the river, taken in October, 1811:[17]

When my wife, my eldest son (then an infant), and myself were returning from Pennsylvania to Kentucky, we found it expedient, the waters being unusually low, to provide ourselves with a skiff, to enable us to proceed to our abode at Henderson. I purchased a large, commodious and light boat of that denomination. We procured a mattress, and our friends furnished us with ready prepared viands. We had two stout negro rowers. . . . Here and there the lonely cabin of a squatter struck the eye, giving note of commencing civilization. The crossing of the stream by a deer foretold how soon the hills would be covered with snow.

Many sluggish flat-boats we overtook and passed; some

laden with produce from the different head-waters of the small rivers that pour their tributary streams into the Ohio; others, of less dimensions, crowded with emigrants from distant parts, in search of a new home.

When I think of those times, and call back to my mind the grandeur of those almost uninhabited shores; when I picture to myself the dense and lofty summits of the forests, that everywhere spread along the hills and overhung the margins of the stream, unmolested by the axe of the settler; when I know how dearly purchased the safe navigation of that river has been, by the blood of many worthy Virginians; when I see that no longer any aborigines are to be found there, and that the vast herds of Elks, Deer, and Buffaloes which once pastured on these hills and in these valleys, making for themselves great roads to the several salt springs, have ceased to exist; when I reflect that all this great portion of our Union, instead of being in a state of nature, is now more or less covered with villages, farms and towns, where the din of hammers and machinery is constantly heard; that the woods are fast disappearing, under the axe by day, and the fire by night; that hundreds of steamboats are gliding to and fro, over the whole length of the majestic river, forcing commerce to take root and to prosper at every spot; when I see the surplus population of Europe coming to assist in the destruction of the forest, and transplanting civilization into its darkest recesses; when I remember that these extraordinary changes have all taken place in the short period of twenty years, I pause, wonder, and although I know all to be fact, can scarcely believe its reality.

Soon after the close of the trip, Audubon was traveling through the Barrens of Kentucky on horseback, when he heard what he thought was the distant rumbling of a violent tornado. Then he noticed that his horse was placing one foot after another on the ground, with as much precaution as if walking on a smooth sheet of ice. "I thought he had suddenly foundered," the traveler wrote, "when he all of a sudden, fell-a-groaning bitterly, hung his head, spread out his four legs, as if to save himself from falling, and stood

stock still, continuing to groan. I thought my horse was about to die, and would have sprung from his back had a minute more elapsed, but at that instant all the shrubs and trees began to move from their very roots, the ground rose and fell in successive furrows, like the ruffled waters of a lake, and I became bewildered in my ideas, as I too plainly discovered that all this awful commotion in nature was the result of an earthquake."

This was the first of many shocks. Later he learned of the awful havoc wrought at New Madrid, Missouri, and on the Mississippi.

It is a coincidence that within a few months of the time when the trip was taken by Audubon, Alexander Wilson, another Philadelphia ornithologist, made a voyage down the river. He traveled in an open skiff, which he called *The Ornithologist*. He adopted this method of travel, not only because it would afford him the best opportunity to make his observations, but because his means were limited.

The start was made from Pittsburg immediately after the breaking up of the winter's ice. His stock of provisions consisted of some biscuit and cheese, and a bottle of cordial; his gun, trunk, and greatcoat were in one end of the boat. He wrote that he "had a small tin occasionally to bale her, and to take my beverage from the Ohio with." Later he said:[18]

The current went about two and a half miles an hour, and I added about three and a half miles more to the boat's way with my oars. In the course of the day I passed a number of arks, or, as they as usually called, Kentucky boats, loaded with what it must be acknowledged are the most valuable commodities of a country; viz. men, women and children, horses and ploughs, flour, millstones, &c. Several of these floating caravans were loaded with store goods for the supply of the settlements through which they passed, having a counter erected, shawls, muslins, &c., displayed, and every thing ready for transacting business. On approaching a settlement they blow a horn or tin trumpet,

which announces to the inhabitants their arrival. I boarded many of these arks, and felt much interested at the sight of so many human beings, migrating like birds of passage to the luxuriant regions of the south and west. The arks are built in the form of a parallelogram, being from twelve to fourteen feet wide, and from forty to seventy feet long, covered above, rowed only occasionally by two oars before, and steered by a long and powerful one fixed above.

Probably Audubon and Wilson had as their daily companions on their trips down the Ohio the Pittsburg "Navigator," the river emigrant's *vade mecum.* This was a pocket guidebook that gave as full information as any one could give about the river, its currents, islands, shoals and rocks, with detail maps of the banks. Those who used the "Navigator" would feel like saying amen to an appeal for the removal of the obstructions to navigation, which was expressed thus: [19]

The consideration for opening the navigation of the Ohio has become a matter of greater importance and necessity for the interest of Pennsylvania now than ever before. The United States road from Cumberland on the Potomack to Wheeling on the Ohio, when completed, will naturally draw a great deal of the trade from the northern states to the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and to Louisiana, through that channel, thereby abridging very much the trade of those states through Pennsylvania. Therefore, if Pennsylvania looks closely to her own interests, she will find that completing the turnpike road from Harrisburgh to Pittsburgh and opening the navigation of the Ohio are the two principal objects which will tend to secure to her her usual commercial, foreign and domestick advantages. Exclusive of the probability of the United States road drawing the trade to the south of Pennsylvania, New York state, on the north, is pushing her inland navigation and opening easy communications from one end of the state to the other, by way of turnpikes, canals, &c., to an extent unparalleled in any other state in the Union.

During the slow progress down the river many an eager emigrant rejoiced as he read of the prophecy of the blessings to come in the new country

where their posterity may rest in safety, having plenty of all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life, where their children's children may enjoy the rich and prolifick production of the land, without an over degree of toil or labour, where the climate is mild and the soil salubrious, where each man is a prince in his own kingdom and may without molestation enjoy the frugal fare of his humble cot; where the clashing and terrifick sounds of war are not heard; where tyrants that desolate the earth dwell not; where man, simple man, if left to the guidance of his own will, subject only to laws of his own making, fraught with mildness, operating equally just on all, and by all protected and willingly obeyed.

A copy of the "Navigator" which was used by one of these early home-makers is a valued possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. As the owner floated down the river he marked with ink little notes on the detail map:

Shot a deer . . . Steamboat passed . . . Struck on this island . . . passed 11 Boats . . . Landed in heavy Rain . . . Passed 14 Boats . . . Fastened to small willows . . . Passed 23 Boats . . . 2 Boats run ashore by wind . . . Canoe with Indian passed . . . Landed in hard wind on company with a family Boat . . . Altered our Stearing ore.

Three years after the copy of the "Navigator" in which these notes were made was in the hands of actual emigrants, the island where the deer was killed was passed by Elias Pym Fordham, a homeseeker from England, who left Pittsburg for Cincinnati in the fall of 1817. His goods he sent on by flatboat at a cost of fifty cents per hundredweight. "These flat boats, or Orleans boats as they are called, in the Western waters are from 12 to 25 feet wide, and from 30 to 90 feet long," he wrote: "They are sold

when they arrive at their place of destination, and broken up. Not over 100 nails are used in building one, but they are stuck together with wooden pins. They will carry 700 barrels of flour. They cost $1 pr. foot in length and sell for 25c. They are manned by four men each, and a pratoon. In the Mississippi double that number is necessary for the stream runs eight miles an hour, and is full of Eddies. Goods are brought up the river on keels or keelboats, which require 12 to 24 men to row and pole them against the current."

Progress on the Ohio was slow, for the current was ordinarily only three miles an hour. But many of the long hours were passed in a skiff, in which he rowed to the shore, where he scrambled over the rocks and searched for curious plants or squirrels. Sometimes the skiff would strike a log, and he would be thrown into the water, but this merely added to the interest of the journey.

When he reached Cincinnati he set out across Indiana, for the English Prairie region in Edwards County in Illinois, to which William Birkbeck had gone earlier in the season. The journey was made on horseback, each person being furnished with an upper and under blanket, and saddle bags, and two pack horses with extra luggage and bedding.

At night the party stopped in roadside taverns, or with farmers, most of whom had a room for travelers. The country traversed was "one vast forest, intersected by a few Blaze roads, and two or three open roads. There are a few new towns and some settlements on and near the state roads and river. These are generally from one to three years old."

III. FROM ARK TO STEAMBOAT

The moonlight sleeps upon thy shores,
  Fair river of the West!
And the soft sound of dipping oars
  Just breaks thy evening rest.
Full many a bark its silver path
  Is tracing o'er thy tide;
And list, the sound of song and laugh
  Floats onward where they glide.
—Sara L. P. Smith.

Another English traveler, William Cobbett[20] gave an interesting sketch of his river trip, taken in 1817:

Leaving Pittsburgh on June 6 he "set out on a thing called an ark. . . . We have, besides, a small skiff, to tow the ark and go ashore occasionally. The ark, which would stow away eight persons, close packed, is a thing by no means pleasant to travel in, especially at night. It is strong at bottom, but may be compared to an orange-box bowed at top, and so badly made as to admit a boy's hand to steal the oranges: it is proof against the river, but not against the rain.

Just on going to push off the wharf, an English officer stepped on board of us, with all the curiosity imaginable. I at once took him for a spy hired to way-lay travellers. He began to talk about the Western Countries, anxiously assuring us that we need not hope to meet with such a thing as a respectable person, travel where we would.

June 9th. Two fine young men join us, one a carpenter and the other a saddler, from Washington, in a skiff they have bought at Pittsburgh and in which they are taking a journey of about seven hundred miles down the river. We allow them to tie their skiff to our ark, for which they very cheerfully assist us. Much diverted to see the nimbleness

with which they go on shore sometimes with their rifles, to shoot pigeon and squirrels. The whole expense of these two young men, floating the seven hundred miles, will be but seven dollars each, including skiff and everything else.

June 13th. Arrived at Cincinnati about midnight. Tied our ark to a large log at the side of the river, and went to sleep. Before morning, however, the fastening broke, and if it had not been for a watchful back-woods man whom we had taken on board some distance up the river, we might have floated ten or fifteen miles without knowing it. . . .

We sold our ark, and its produce formed a deduction from our expenses, which, with that deduction, amounted to fourteen dollars each, including every thing, for the journey from Pittsburgh to this place. . . .

From Cincinnati the party floated down the river in a rowboat, ascended the Wabash, and went to Princeton. At Princeton horses were bought and they rode over to see Mr. Birkbeck on English Prairie. "Before we got to the Wabash we had to cross a swamp half a mile wide," Mr. Cobbett continued. "We were obliged to lead our horses, and walk up to the knees in mud and water. Before we got half across we began to think of going back; but there is a sound bottom under it all, and we waded through it as well as we could."

Travel along and through marshes like those crossed by Mr. Cobbett and exposure on the flat boats caused so much sickness among the emigrants that David Thomas[21] in 1819 wrote for the benefit of those who should follow him:

The manner of removing hither is such that our surprise is rather excited that so few are diseased. Many are cooped up during the heat of summer for six weeks, exposed to the powerful reflection of the sun from the water, while the roof over their heads is heated like an oven. In addition, they have the smell of bilge water, and the exhalations from the muddy shores. Their daily drink is supplied by the river; its warmth relaxes the tone of the stomach.

This was Mr. Thomas' counsel:

Descend the river after the commencement of autumn at frosts . . . avoid going in a vessel with a leaky roof. A crowded boat is an inconvenient place to dry wet clothes, and the expense of being comfortably sheltered will frequently be less than the damage in furniture, without considering the probable loss of health. To bend thin boards for a cover is customary, but not sufficient. I have seen no roof of that kind which would be a shelter from a driving shower of rain. A sick woman said to me near the Wabash, "I ascribe my sickness, in great measure, to one dismal night that I endured on the river. The rain poured through every part of the roof, and to sit on the bed with my children, under an umbrella, was our only refuge."

Birkbeck's English Prairie was the Mecca of many Englishmen who had been lured thither by reading his letters from America. In August, 1819, John Woods,[22] on his way to Illinois, reached the Ohio, after traveling by the National Turnpike. At the end of the trip he said that his journey from England had required one hundred and thirty-nine days, as follows: Voyage to Baltimore, 58 days; 16 days in Baltimore; 16 days to Wheeling; 38 days Wheeling to Shawneetown; 7 days here; 4 days more to the Prairies, by keel boat to the mouth of the Bonpas, and on foot the remainder of the way.

He spoke highly of the treatment received by the way, from residents, waggoners, tavern keepers. "In short, we met with as good treatment as we should in a tour through England; but the manners of the Americans are more rough than those of Englishmen."

Mr. Woods, in surprise, several times recorded the fact that he had not had an accident or sickness of any kind on the route. An emigrant woman of whom Thomas Nuttall[23] wrote was not so fortunate. She had a terrifying experience with a hurricane while on a flatboat on the Ohio. "She herself and one of her children had taken their regular turn at the oar, the master of the boat, who had his family

around him, became so far alarmed and confused as to quit his post in the midst of the danger which threatened instantly to overwhelm them, tremendous waves broke into the boat, which the affrighted steersman knew not how to avoid. This woman seized the helm, which was abandoned, and by her skill and courage saved the boat and the families from imminent destruction."

Another side of river travel was recorded by John A. Quitman,[24] twenty-one years old, who crossed the Alleghenies on foot and arrived at Pittsburg November 2, 1819. Of his passage down the river in a keel boat he said:

The accommodations were very rough, but the ladies made it agreeable. Miss Griffith played on the flageolet and I on the flute. I felt like poor Goldsmith when, wandering over Europe, he fluted for his supper. Our fowling-pieces supplied us with game; biscuit and jerked venison were our standbys.

Writing of a journey taken at about the same time, Judge Hall [25] said that the forty-five ton keel boat on which he was a passenger was "laden with merchandise and navigated by eight or ten of those half-bone and half-alligator gentry, commonly called 'Ohio boatmen,' who delighted to pull the oars to some such ditty as:

Some rows up, but we rows down,
All the way to Shawneetown.
Pullaway—pullaway!"

To-day we passed two large crafts lashed together, by which simple conveyance several families from New England were transporting themselves and their property to the land of promise in the western woods. Each raft was eighty or ninety feet long, with a small house erected on it; and on each was a stack of hay, round which several horses and cows were feeding, while the paraphernalia of a farm-yard, the ploughs, waggons, pigs, children and poultry, carelessly distributed, gave to the whole more the appearance of a permanent residence, than of a caravan of

adventurers seeking a home. A respectable looking old lady, with spectables on nose, was seated on a chair at the door of one of the cabins, employed in knitting; another female was at the wash-tub; the men were chewing their tobacco, with as much complacency as if they had been in "the land of steady habits," and the various family associations seemed to go on like clockwork. In this manner the people travel at a slight expense. They bring their own provisions; the raft floats with the current; and honest Jonathan, surrounded with his scolding, grunting, squalling, and neighing dependents, floats to the point proposed without leaving his own fireside; and on his arrival there, may step on shore with his house and commence business. . . .

Many emigrants came to the Ohio from Tennessee and Kentucky by way of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers. So few were the records left by these, however, that the story of W. B. De Wees [26] is of special value.

On March 1, 1819, he left Nashville. On a keel boat he reached the Ohio by way of the Cumberland, and then the Mississippi. He made no comment on the country until he came to the Walnut Hills, on the Mississippi River. Then he waxed enthusiastic:

They are elevated seventy-five or one hundred feet above the common level of the river. Although it was in the winter season, the grass was perfectly green. The scenery was certainly enchanting!

The vessels upon this river consist in part of barges and keel boats, but mostly of upper country flat-boats, generally called broad-horns. . . . While at Natchez I saw a steamboat. I spent some time on board examining this boat. . . . I think this invention of Robert Fulton will eventually prove to be of great advantage to this part of the country, and I hope the time will soon come, as I firmly believe it will, when they will take the place of the vessels which are now occupied in navigating this majestic river. Nor do I think I am too sanguine when I say that in twenty-five years from now whoever lives to see that time will find steam navigation to be the most common mode.

After entering Red River, we found our labors very toilsome; on account of our boat being a large, family boat, crowded with women and children, we found it very difficult to row and push up stream. However, we got along very well, though slowly, until we arrived at the Big Raft. . . .

Our course through the raft was very slow and toilsome. The distance is about ninety miles. We were thirty days in making this distance. Ours is the only boat of any size that has ever passed through the raft. Had we not been so fortunate as to secure the service of a Caddo Indian, who had passed through before, as a guide, we should most likely have been lost.

I hardly know how to give you a description of this raft, but perhaps you can get the best description of it by imagining yourself in a large swamp, grown up with trees and filled up with driftwood, wedged in very closely, the water having no particular current and running in no particular direction. During the thirty days we saw land but two or three times, and then only some small islands. At night we tied our boats to a tree and remained till morning. Sometimes we would come across lakes two or three miles in extent, and then again we would spend a whole day in moving not further than the length of the boat.

But I must not forget to tell you of the immense quantity of bee trees which we found in this raft. At any time we could go in our "dug out," and return laden with a large quantity of honey, which we found truly delicious.

After we were safely through the raft, we had no difficulty in getting to this place, [Long Prairie] which is only about a three days' journey. The country from Natchitoches to this place is generally uninhabited, except by a few Indians.

Long Prairie is the first large prairie on Red river, from the mouth up, and is surrounded by a heavily timbered country. The land is very rich. . . . The population of this part of the country consisted of two families previous to our arrival. As to the health of the place I know but little . . . but from appearances I should not judge favor-

ably of it. Here I saw for the first time a person shaking with the ague. I supposed the person to be dying. . . .

The prevalence of ague in this region was due in large part to the curious Red River Raft, the largest and most remarkable formation of the kind of which there is any record. The Red river, more than seventeen hundred miles long, was practically closed to navigation by a timber raft of enormous extent. Early explorers were unable to ascend the stream, and most later navigators found it necessary to make use of a series of bayous and creeks to reach the headwaters.

The raft was described in 1855 [27] as "an accumulation of trees, logs, and drift, extending over the surface of the river from bank to bank, and for miles in extent, so close and compact as to be walked over without wetting the feet. Broom straw, willows, and other small bushes are growing out of the rich, alluvial earth that covers the logs, so that it presents the appearance of an old worn-out field that has been abandoned to grow up again."

It has been conjectured that the formation of this raft began nearly five centuries ago. The cause, it is agreed, was that waters of the Mississippi, being high from a freshet when the Red river was low, backed up and made still water at the mouth. Driftwood floating downstream was stopped in the still water; further accumulations made a solid mass from shore to shore. When the Mississippi fell to the level of the Red river, the mass became jammed. The banks of the stream being heavily wooded, vast quantities of timber were added, and the raft grew at the rate of about a mile and a half a year. As the years passed, the oldest timber rotted, and sections of the raft broke away and floated down to the Gulf of Mexico. The process of decay was not sufficiently rapid to keep pace with the additions, and the raft increased in length, while gradually receding upstream. This recession was so slow, that one man said, "If we would wait two hundred years, it would

give us navigation up to some eight hundred miles above the mouth."

But it was impossible to wait on the processes of nature. The whole Red river country was malarial because of the decaying timber. As the raft grew, settlers were driven back, not only by the malaria, but by the waters which overflowed the prairie, and made of a fertile country a lake from twenty to thirty miles wide. Homes were deserted, and the development of the region was retarded. When Government engineers made a preliminary survey in 1833, the raft was found to be one hundred and twenty-eight miles long, the lower end being about four hundred miles above the mouth of the stream. Operations were begun at once, under the direction of Captain Shreve.

At first the work was not difficult. The lower part of the raft was in such a state of decay, and yielded so readily to the grapplings of the steamer that about one hundred miles of it was pulled away the first season. Good navigation was then established up to Coates' Bluff, now Shreveport, so named for the leader of the expedition.

The last thirty miles of the obstruction presented great difficulties. The timber was solid, and the completion of the work required many years. Not until 1873 was a navigable channel opened. At once the level of the water was lowered fifteen feet. But it is still necessary to keep snag boats in action, that the raft may not be renewed.

During the progress of the work of removal Captain Shreve and his associates were encouraged by the prophecy that some day the fertile lands of the valley "would be inhabited by a dense population, and the waters freighted with the produce of its unlimited fine range for cattle and hogs, and also with cotton, wheat and other grains."

It was not necessary to go to the Red River Country to find malaria. The author of "An Englishman's Pocket Note-book in 1828," [28] who "took boat at Wheeling," on November 28, wrote:

The steamboat is very small and dirty . . . the low state of the water in the Ohio not allowing large steamboats to ply at this season of the year. . . . Crammed with passengers, all equally disagreeable. . . The settlers are few, and cultivation along the banks scarcely seen. They are subject here and on the river to the ague and bilious fever. The few inhabitants I saw were sickly, emaciated beings. No doubt the climate will improve when the land is cleared.

The Englishman could not restrain his wonder at the number of steamboats on the river. On November 10, when he reached Cincinnati, he said:

We saw here 20 large and small steamboats, and on the quay an immense number of drays and wagons. . . . The town has risen within 2 years and in the very midst of forests to be a place of considerable importance and trade.

The Pittsburg "Navigator," printed in 1814, from which a quotation has already been made, spoke enthusiastically [29] of the marvel of the river that was to be such a large factor in the transformation of the Western Country:

There is now on foot a new mode of navigating our western waters, particularly the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers. This is with boats propelled by the power of steam. This plan has been carried into successful operation on the Hudson river at New York, and on the Delaware between New Castle and Burlington. It has been stated that the one on the Hudson goes at the rate of four miles an hour against wind and tide on her route between New York and Albany, and frequently with 300 passengers on board. From these successful experiments there can be but little doubt of the plan succeeding on our western waters, and proving of immense advantage to the commerce of our country. A Mr. Rosewalt, a gentleman of enterprise, who is acting it is said in conjunction with Messrs. Fulton and Livingston of New York, has a boat of this kind now (1810) on the stocks at Pittsburgh, of 138 feet keel, calculated for 300 or 400 tons burden.

A footnote called attention to the fact that the boat was in successful operation. "She passes floating wood on the river as you pass objects on land when on a swift trotting horse." The vessel, it was stated, could make thirteen trips a year to New Orleans, at an income of $31,200 a year, and an expense of $6,906. As the cost of the boat was $40,000, this return seemed startling. The hope was expressed that these returns would encourage others so that the people of the world would "see the advantage of steam power over that of the oars and poles, and ere long have steam boats of all sizes and fashions, running up and down our numerous rivers, with as much ease and facility as does the common canoe under the direction of its skilful original masters, the Indians."

The "Navigator's" "Mr. Rosewalt" was Nicholas J. Roosevelt, who, in 1809, with Mrs. Roosevelt, made an adventurous trip down the Ohio and the Mississippi, as far as New Orleans, to examine critically the rivers with a view to the possibility of navigation by the steamboat which he hoped to build. Mrs. Roosevelt said of the trip:[30]

The journey in the flat boat commenced at Pittsburgh, where Mr. Roosevelt had it built; a huge box containing a comfortable bedroom, dining room, pantry and a room in front for the crew, with a fireplace where the cooking was done. The top of the boat was flat, with seats and an awning. We had on board a pilot, three hands, and a man cook. We always stopped at night, lashing the boat to the shore. The row boat was a large one, in which Mr. Roosevelt went out continually with two or three men to ascertain the rapidity of the ripple or current.

As Mr. Roosevelt met travelers and traders along the river he told them of his belief that the river could be navigated by steamboats, but they laughed at him. His faith, however, was strong, and when he returned to the East he sought capitalists in New York. These were so interested in his report that in 1811 he found himself in Pittsburg once more, ready to work on the steamboat.

Men were sent to the forest to cut timber for ribs, knees, and beams. These were rafted down the Monongahela to the shipyard. Planking was cut from white-pine logs, in the old-fashioned saw-pits. A shipbuilder and the mechanics required were brought from New York.

When the boat, one hundred and sixteen feet long, was ready, it was christened the *New Orleans*.

On the initial trip Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt were the only passengers. The crew was made up of the captain, the engineer, the pilot, six deckhands, and four servants.

Eager watchers at Pittsburg saw the vessel swing into the stream and disappear around the first headlands. Many of them shook their heads, declaring that the boat would never reach Cincinnati.

But it did reach Cincinnati. The welcome there was hearty, but there, too, doubters were many. When the lines were cast loose, some said, "We see you for the last time. Your boat may go *down* the river; but, as to coming up it, the very idea is an absurd one."

The Cincinnati doubters were convinced when the boat returned from Louisville, having been stopped by the lack of sufficient water to carry it over the Falls.

When the stage of water was right, Louisville was safely passed. Then began days of anxiety, due not to the steamer's failure to mind her helm, but to the great earthquake of 1811, which struck terror to the hearts of thousands, changed river channels, and worked other transformations in the physical appearance of the country for hundreds of miles.

At New Madrid, scores of people begged to be taken on board. They reported that the earth had opened and that many houses and their inhabitants had been swallowed up. Other settlers hid from the boat, thinking that its appearance was a part of the calamity that had overtaken the town.

At last the steamboat passed out of the field of the earthquake, and once more there was quiet. Natchez and

New Orleans were reached in good time, and the voyage of the first steamboat on the Ohio and Mississippi was ended —"the voyage which changed the relations of the West—which may almost be said to have changed its destiny."

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

(See Bibliography)

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7. "Washington County and the Early Settlements of Ohio," p. 29.
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19. "The Pittsburgh Navigator," p. 28.
20. "A Year's Residence in the United States of America," p. 323.
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22. "Two Years' Residence in the Settlement of the English Prairie," p. 143.
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24. "Central Ohio Seventy Years Ago," p. 224.
25. "Letters from the West," p. 94.
26. "Letters from an Early Settler in Texas," p. 10.
27. "DeBow's Review," p. 437.
28. "An Englishman's Pocket Note Book," p. 334.
29. "The Navigator," p. 30.
30. "The First Steamboat in Western Waters," p. 7.

CHAPTER FOUR: FROM NORTHERN NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND TO THE WEST

THE PRAIRIES

"I . . . think I hear
The sound of that advancing multitude
Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
Of Sabbath worshipers. The low of herds
Blends with the rustling of a heavy grain
Over the dark brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
And I am in the wilderness alone.

—William Cullen Bryant.

I. THE LONG ROAD TO THE WESTERN RESERVE

Home is home, no matter where!
Sang a happy, youthful pair,
Journeying westward, years ago,—
As they left the April snow
White on Massachusetts' shore;
Left the sea's incessant roar,
Left the Adirondacks piled
Like the playthings of a child,
On the horizon's eastern bound;
And, the unbroken forests found,
Heard Niagara's sullen call,
Hurrying to his headlong fall,
Like a Titan in distress,
Tearing through the wilderness,
Bending earth apart, in hate
Of the unpitying hand of fate.

—Lucy Larcom.

A WRITER too modest to use his name has given the following characterization of the pioneer who conquered the wilderness:

The young American has inherited a genius for colonization. He has seen and learned by tradition of the growth of comfort, wealth and refinement, of the increased values of land, and the rapid rise of cities and acquisition of capital around him in his more easterly home. He starts out full of courage and hope, with no other capital than these qualities and his strong arm, to acquire the cheap land and build himself a home in the West. He leaves behind friends and kindred, resolved to achieve fortune and consequence, and then to return East to marry and carry his wife to the new land. He is enterprising and full of faith. He knows that his adopted State or Territory will soon become populous,

and contain large cities and all the comforts and luxuries he has left in the East. He hastens to seize the rich soil, the forest of timber, the coal field, the iron, copper or lead mine, the fine water power or the promising town-site, which have remained since creation untouched in that country of hope. As he acquires fortune, and his boys grow up, they too become filled with the inevitable longing. The land around him has become valuable; the social and business chances are diminished by competition; they know the story of their father's career and the most enterprising imitate it, and start out to advance still farther the line of the Western frontier.

That the residents of New England and Eastern New York were slower to exhibit this longing to seek new homes in the territory to the west of them than were the people of Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia and North Carolina was not due to the absence of desire to make the venture, but to hindrances in the way. For them the road to the West was long blocked by a wilderness in which swarmed Indians whose instinctive hatred of the white man was intensified by alliance with civilized enemies of the colonists.

Of course they could have gone south and joined the company of those who were straggling across Pennsylvania, or through the Blue Ridge Mountains to Cumberland Gap. Some of them did adopt this course, but these were comparatively few, for the unoccupied lands to the south did not appeal to a large number of New Englanders with the spirit of the pioneer who braves tremendous perils for the sake of carving a new home from the wilderness. Their thoughts turned to other lands in their own latitude. The Connecticut citizen, for instance, had been taught that his state had title to uncounted millions of acres far to the westward of her accepted border. Had not Charles II, in 1662, decreed by royal charter that Connecticut should have "all of the lands west of it, to the extent of its breadth, from sea to sea?"

To be sure, the same monarch had made a grant to William Penn which included a portion of the lands already granted to Connecticut, even to the extent of two-fifths of the entire Penn grant; but this conflicting grant was made in 1681. That is, for nineteen years before Penn sailed up the Delaware, Connecticut had owned the lands covered by the overlapping grant. Some day she would take possession of this two-fifths of Pennsylvania.

Another break in the continuity of the lands west of Connecticut, "to the extent of its breadth from sea to sea," was between Connecticut and the eastern line of Pennsylvania. This section was one of the choice parts of New York State, and there could be no thought of settling here.

Of other lands beyond the western borders of Pennsylvania they had heard vague tales from soldiers and adventurers. But these were too far distant, and there were too many obstacles in the way.

Yet there were some Connecticut men who felt they must respond to the call of the new land. So they decided to assert their right to a beautiful unsettled region in Northeastern Pennsylvania. One company of emigrants, called the Delaware Company, was organized for the purpose. They bought the title of the Indians to certain lands bordering on the Delaware and in 1757 settled at Cushutunk, in what is now Wayne County, Pennsylvania. The Susquehanna Company, organized in 1753, with eight hundred and forty members, paid £2000 to the Indians for their right to the Wyoming Valley, in what is now Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

The Governor of Pennsylvania appealed to the Governor of Connecticut to keep the invaders from his state. The protest did not delay the settlement, but the Indian war was a hindrance until 1762, when some two hundred men from Connecticut settled about a mile from the site on which later Wilkes-Barre was built.

Then began the effort to drive out the emigrants that was to end in one of the greatest tragedies of early pioneer

life. The Delaware Indians claimed that the lands on which the settlement was made had been "sold from under their feet," and appealed to the Governor of Pennsylvania to send back to Connecticut the men of the Wyoming Valley. The Penns also made a like appeal. For many years the Indians and the Penns waged warfare against the hardy settlers. More than once they were driven out, each time with great loss of life, but each time they returned to the lands they claimed. The "Pennamite wars," as they were called, would have stood a better chance of success if the people of Pennsylvania had loved the Penns better, but many of the residents of the state sided with the Connecticut men.

Connecticut's temper was shown when, in January, 1774, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, was made a part of the new Westmoreland County, Connecticut. A settler was sent from this section to the Connecticut Legislature to represent the six thousand people who owned allegiance to the Nutmeg State.

The day of Wyoming's tragedy was July 3, 1778, when about seven hundred Indians, perhaps a hundred Tories and four hundred British soldiers fell on the defenders of Forty Fort. One hundred and sixty men were killed, many of them after cruel torture. The story of those who escaped to Fort Pennsylvania, where Stroudsburg now stands, is a marvelous record of endurance.

Not even the memory of this awful flight could hold back the men of Connecticut from reasserting their rights. A few months later another colony tramped through the wilderness to the Wyoming Valley, and many emigrants followed for several succeeding years.

Finally, in 1781, Pennsylvania appealed to Congress to settled the controversy. The Commission appointed for the purpose decided that the territory within Pennsylvania's borders claimed by Connecticut belonged to Pennsylvania. Thereupon Pennsylvania refused to give private titles to the lands occupied by the hardy settlers. Determined not to

be deprived of their hard-won homes, the settlers took steps to organize the state of Susquehanna, of which Wyoming was to be the capital. Fortunately Pennsylvania came to terms with them, and finally, in 1807, peace settled over the Wyoming Valley.

Long before this Connecticut had resigned her claim to the rather indefinite boundaries fixed by her royal charter. Massachusetts, New York and Virginia had joined her in yielding to Congress their claims to lands in the country north of the Ohio. Connecticut, however, reserved a tract along Lake Erie, west of Pennsylvania, containing 3,666,-291 acres. It is interesting to note that this section was equal in size to the lands surrendered in Pennsylvania. In 1792 the western portion of the Western Reserve was appropriated by the legislature of Connecticut, for the benefit of the people of the towns in the state which had been burned by the British during the war. Their portion of the Reserve became known as "the Fire Lands."

At once the men of Connecticut whose hearts beat more quickly as they dreamed of conquering the wilderness turned their thoughts toward the Lake Erie Country, and when, in 1795, Conecticut made a quitclaim deed to the trustees of the Connecticut Land Company, for 3,000,000 acres of the Reserve, in consideration of the payment of $1,200,000, there were hundreds who wished to arrange with the Company to cross the six hundred miles of wilderness that separated them from the region where they hoped to make homes for their families.

It would not have been possible to encourage these first applicants for Western Reserve lands by promising them good roads across Western New York. There were no good roads; in fact, there were practically no roads of any sort.

The opening of the Genesee Country in Northern New York a few years after the Revolution led emigrants to venture into the wilderness, along the old Iroquois trail, to the lands of the Holland Purchase, an immense tract of

more than three million acres, so named because Robert Morris, who had acquired it from Massachusetts, had sold it to a company backed by residents of Holland.

Of these early days J. H. Kennedy has told feelingly:[1]

The journey from the East was in itself a terrible experience. . . . The springless wagon or the sled, loaded with household goods, farming implements, weapons of defense, and food, with wife and children stowed in corners, were the chief vehicle of transportation, and the road a mere path through the woods, or a trail along which room for passage must be cut through the trees.

As late as 1788 Elkanah Watson declared that the road from Albany to Schenectady was in a shameful state. "The present road system is a disgrace to this fair state," was the verdict.

Records of the country[2] tell of the experience of an unnamed traveler in the wilderness:

On the 15th of February 1792, I left Albany, on my route to the Genesee River, but the Country was thought so remote and so very little known that I could not prevail on the owner of the stage to engage farther than Whitestown, a new settlement at the head of the Mohawk, 100 miles from Albany. The road as far as Whitestown had been made passable for wagons, but from there to the Genesee river was little better than an Indian path, sufficiently opened to allow a sled to pass, and some impassable streams had been bridged. At Whitestown, I was obliged to change my carriage, the Albany man getting alarmed for himself and horses when he found that for the next 100 miles we were not only obliged to take provisions for ourselves but for our horses and blankets for our beds. On leaving Whitestown we found only a few straggling huts, scattered along the path, from 10 to 20 miles from each other; and they offered nothing but the conveniency of fire, and a kind of shelter from the snow.

From Geneva to Canandarqua the road is only the Indian path a little improved; . . . on this road there were only

two families settled. From Canandarqua to the Genesee river, 26 miles, it is almost totally uninhabited, only four families residing on the road.

One of the early settlers who came to the Holland Purchase a little later, is quoted in the same volume [3] as to her first home in this country of rough roads:

It was about ten feet square, flat roofed, covered with split ash shingles; the floor was made of the halves of split basswood, no chinking; a blanket served the purpose of a door for a while, until my husband got time to make a door of split plank. We needed no window; the light came in where the smoke went out . . . For chairs, we had benches made by splitting logs, and setting the sections upon logs. A bedstead was made by boring holes in the side of the shanty, inserting pieces of timber, which rested upon two upright posts in front; a sidepiece completing the structure; pealed basswood bark, answering the place of a cord. We of course had brought no bed with us on horseback, so one had to be procured. We bought a cotton bag, and stuffing it with cat-tails, it was far better than no bed.

On March 22, 1794, the Legislature authorized the construction of the Genesee Road, which was to become the great emigrant thoroughfare toward Buffalo. A lottery was authorized to raise money for the project, and the people along the route became so enthusiastic that they subscribed four thousand days' work.

The road was made sixty-four feet wide. Logs and gravel were used freely, especially in marshy ground.

The first section was completed in 1797, from Fort Schuyler to Geneva. Two years later the boast was made that "a wagon with two oxen will go twenty miles per day with a load of thirty hundredweight."

In December, 1798, Amos Loveland started westward, with his family of seven, and all his worldly goods, packed in two sleds, each of which was drawn by a team of horses. He was able to make fair progress, but had many trying experiences.

When President Dwight went through the Mohawk Valley in September, 1799,[4] he found the condition of the road trying. Many of the bridges were out of repair. "The road on the lowlands is good in dry weather," he wrote, "but in wet, muddy and extremely disagreeable. On the hills it was indifferent, but perhaps as good as could be expected in a country so recently settled. . . . Traveling is not merely uncomfortable, but a herculean labor."

In 1804 the road was made a turnpike. In that year Dr. Dwight made a trip on the Great Western Turnpike, from Manlius to Buffalo. He found the first part of the road in fair condition, and noted that settlements were increasing rapidly. However, when he was sixteen miles beyond the Genesee river, stumps and roots made traveling dangerous. "Mud was knee deep, and so stiff the horse could barely extricate himself. The road was a narrow passage, newly cut through the forest. After groping and struggling for three hours on a distance of four miles, he reached his inn, a log house."

At Batavia he had the choice of two roads to Buffalo Creek. One of them was eighteen miles long, with thirteen miles of mud, while the second was twenty-three miles long, with nine miles of mud. He chose the longer road because of the prospect of less mud.

Improvement came very slowly. Miss Martineau, in her account of a trip through the country,[5] taken a generation later, spoke of the corduroy roads:

> Lastly there is the corduroy road, happily of rare occurrence, where, if the driver is merciful to his passengers, he drives so as to give them the association of being on the way to a funeral, their involuntary sobs on each jolt helping to the resemblance, or, if he be in a hurry, he shakes them like pills in a pill box.

"Such a wretched apology for a highway," said a traveler in 1833,[6] "ought to have immortalized its inventor's name, instead of being called after the coarse cloth which it re-

sembles in grain. The man, at least, deserved a patent for having discovered a most excruciating method of dislocating bones, and an easy method of breaking the axle-trees of carriages.

In July, 1807, Christian Schultz, Junior,[7] made a curious trip from New York City to Niagara. The way to Albany was easy, for he went by river. To Schenectady, fifteen miles, he went on a good turnpike road, but he had to beware of the wagoners, many of whom, he said, were great rogues.

"Should you chance to have occasion for their services," he added, "it will not only be well to be very careful, but, likewise, to make your bargain before you employ them, or like me, you will have to 'pay for learning'."

After a water trip of one hundred and four miles from Mohawk to Utica, he had a journey by various waterways of one hundred and fourteen miles to Oswego. On the sailing vessel he had a pleasing experience that made him forget many of the vexations of the way:

> The passage money, if any is charged, is about two dollars, finding your own provisions; but if you furnish a good table, no passage money will be received, and these open-hearted fellows always seem much pleased to have gentlemen for passengers.

From Rome to Wood Creek, he made use of a little canal which boasted five locks. He said that Wood Creek is "celebrated for the size, activity and number of its moschetoes."

The creek was twelve yards wide. At one place a tree had fallen across the stream. The boat was moving rapidly, and a bend hid the tree until the boat was almost upon it. The captain, seeing that he must strike the obstruction, called on the passengers to look out for themselves. Some articles were swept overboard as the tree was struck, including the visitor's trunks. One passenger had no time to go aft for safety. He was not to be found when the cap-

tain was able to look about him, but anxiety was relieved when he was discovered perched in the branches of the tree, where he had jumped to avoid being crushed.

After going by lake from Oswego to the Niagara river, Schultz went up the river to Niagara. Thence he went on, continuing to Fort Erie, making use of "a tolerable horse path" on the Canal side, and noting that "the British side is one settled street from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario," and that "the American side remains almost wholly waste and unimproved."

Continuing his journey from Lake Erie toward Pittsburg he wrote, "I never saw a *bad* road before." On this road three yoke of oxen were able to haul only six barrels of salt, and they required from two and a half to three days to make fourteen miles.

On this road mud was frequently up to the knees, as he sat in the saddle. At the end of the day both horse and rider were covered from head to foot with mud at least half an inch thick. He decided to plunge two or three dozen times in the river, with all his clothes on. Then it was necessary to borrow clothes, for the trunk did not overtake him until next day. He found everything in it covered with mud, for the wagon to which he had entrusted it had overturned in a mud-hole. The trunk, being on top of the load, sank to the bottom of the mud-hole, with all the other freight heaped on it.

The terrors of those primitive roads did not deter the pioneers who were determined to settle the lands of the Western Reserve, which beckoned from just beyond the western boundary of New York. In 1796 Moses Cleaveland, one the directors of the Connecticut Company, and its General Agent, gathered at Schenectady a company of from forty-five to fifty, including thirty-seven employees, some of them surveyors, and a few emigrants. Two of the men in the company were married. Thirteen horses were taken along.[8] From Schenectady the party went up the Mohawk in bateaux. At what is now Rome they took their boats

and stores across into Wood Creek, then went on to Oneida Lake, and from there to Oswego. There they took passage for Niagara. Buffalo was reached on June 17. Here, on June 23, a treaty was concluded with Red Jacket and the principal chiefs of the Six Nations, by which the Connecticut Company was given the right to settle on the Indian lands in the Western Reserve. The consideration was £500, to be paid in goods to the Western Indians, and two beef cattle and one hundred gallons of whiskey to be given to the Eastern Indians.

On June 27 the party left Buffalo and embarked in open boats on Lake Erie. Most of them were in the boats, but some walked on the bank.

In his journal General Cleaveland told of the landing:

> On the creek "Conneaugh," in New Connecticut Land, July 4, 1796 . . . We gave three cheers and Christened the place Fort Independence, and, after many difficulties, perplexities and hardships were surmounted and we were on the good and promised land, felt that a just tribute of respect to the day ought to be paid. There were in all, including women and children, fifty in number. The men, under Captain Tinker, ranged themselves on the beach and fired a Federal Salute of fifteen rounds, and then the sixteenth in honor of New Connecticut. Drank several toasts. Closed with three cheers. Drank several pints of grog. Supped and returned in good order.

Next day a log cabin was built on the bank of Conneaut Creek, and this was called Stow Castle, in honor of the commissary of the expedition. The roof was brush, wild grass and sod.

Thus another settlement was added to the very few west of the Genesee River and east of Detroit. Before the Cleaveland party's arrival in New Connecticut these settlements had been the garrison at Niagara, two families at Lewistown, one at Buffalo and one at Sandusky. There were a few adventurers at the Salt Springs of the Mahon-

ing, but with this exception the interior of New Connecticut was a wilderness.

General Cleaveland was called Moses, "becauses he had led his followers into the wilderness." Then, like Joshua, he proved a good leader in opening the new country for the wilderness wanderers. He sent surveyors into the interior, he held councils with the suspicious Indians, in 1796 he cleared six acres of land and sowed the first seed, and he founded a settlement which was named Cleaveland in his honor. The name became Cleveland because of the act of the editor of an early paper published there, who omitted the "a" since there was no room for it in the headline of his paper. From that day the shorter form came to be accepted.

One of General Cleaveland's most helpful acts was the laying out, in 1797, of the Girdled Road from the Pennsylvania line to Cleveland. This followed an old Indian trail, along the lake shore, which was indicated by blazed trees.

In 1800 Connecticut surrendered to the United States all claim to civil jurisdiction over the Western Reserve, and on July 10, 1800, Governor St. Clair created Trumbull County, in which the new settlements were included. At the first election held in Warren, forty-two votes were cast.

In less than three years, on February 19, 1803, Ohio became a state in the Union by the act of Congress providing for "the execution of the laws of the United States within the State of Ohio."

The character of the population of the new state had been determined by the ordinance of 1787, making the whole Northwestern Territory free territory. Thus this was "the first new state that did not 'just grow,' like Tennessee and Kentucky." [9]

From the beginning emigrants were attracted to the country north of the Ohio and south of Lake Erie from New England, New York, and Pennsylvania. The non-slave holding farmers of the South Atlantic states, as well as those from Tennessee and Kentucky, flocked in. How

these Southerners looked on the opportunities offered by Ohio is seen from a curious document addressed by James Tongue to "The Middling People of Maryland." [10] In this he wrote what probably turned the thoughts of many lovers of freedom to the Western Reserve.

It is the duty of those who are in a more humble or dependent condition in life to struggle with all their power to elevate themselves and their families. This can never be done by a residence in Maryland.

I have been years devoting myself to acquire a knowledge of the several states and territories, to ascertain which presented the greatest and most certain natural advantages.

Southern states—no; burning heat & slavery the difficulties. This cannot be that safe, certain, and happy country, in which I could wish to plant my children and my grandchildren.

He studied the country west of the Mississippi, but was disgusted by the thought of claims and counter-claims which would not be settled for generations. In Tennessee and Kentucky he found slavery and disputed titles.

Vermont and Maine were locked up in eternal frost for six months in the year. Michigan, he declared was marshy and was inundated seven months in the year, and the country for months was very cold.

Indiana was one vast prairie without wood or water; it was distant from market, and the colonial government was not likely to be changed in his lifetime.

Then he turned to Ohio, "the only place that combined certainty of title with richness of soil, conveniency to market, relief from the evils of slavery, an invaluable fishing, convenience of water communication, and a climate both healthy and agreeable."

The section of all others in Ohio, he said, was New Connecticut. "Here, fellow-citizens, after the most mature reflection, and the most complete information I could acquire, I have determined to settle myself and family, at some place not very distant from the lake."

Then he proceeded to set forth in detail reasons why the Middling People of Maryland should follow his example.

Jacob Russell of Connecticut was one of the early emigrants to the Cleveland country. He traveled with an ox team, his wife riding alongside on horseback. When they reached the Reserve, he left her and returned for their children. One of them, years later, recorded her experiences:[11]

Our journey was attended with the greatest suffering. My youngest sister was sick all the way, dying three days after our arrival. Father was then taken down with ague, so our new house was built slowly. With the greatest difficulty mother hewed with an adze the stub ends of the floor boards, and put them close down with the little help father could give her.

In 1801 Timothy Doane's wife and children followed him from Buffalo to Cleveland. One of the sons, at that time three years old, when he was a man, wrote a description of the trip:

Besides the four children, mother was accompanied by an Indian and several white men, whom she had hired to assist us on the journey. We came by Lake Erie . . . in an ordinary row-boat, propelled by oars most of the way, but frequently by a tow-line in the hands of the Indian, who walked along the bank. . . . At the mouth of Grand river the boat was overturned, and loss of lives was prevented only because the water was shallow.

Other families came in two-wheeled carts, some on small wagons to which but one horse was attached . . . Streams had to be crossed by any means that could be improvised. . . . It was not unusual for a team to give out, and a week or even a fortnight be allowed for recuperation.

II. FROM LAND TO WATER

Hope and Courage whispered, Go,
Ye who toil and ye who wait,
Opportunities in starlight, lo,
Open swing the people's gate!
Beyond the mountains and under the skies
Of the Wonderful West your future lies,
On the banks of the Beautiful River,
By the shores of the Lakes of the North,
There fortune to each will deliver
His share of the teeming earth.

—W. H. Venable.

THE first great improvement in transportation to the Western Reserve came when the *Walk-in-the-Water,* the first steamboat on the Great Lakes, was built. An eye-witness of the vessel's first voyage described it thus:[12]

On the twenty-fourth day of August, 1818, an entire novelty—the like of which not one in five hundred of the inhabitants had ever seen—presented itself before the people of Cuyahoga County. On that day the residents along the lake shore of Euclid saw upon the lake a curious kind of vessel making what was considered very rapid progress westward, without the aid of sails, while from a pipe near the middle rose a dark cloud of smoke, which trailed its gloomy length far into the rear of the swift-gliding mysterious traveller on the deep. They watched its westward course until it turned its prow toward the harbor of Cleveland; and then turned back to their work. Many of them doubtless knew what it was, but some shook their heads in sad surmise as to whether some evil power were not at work introducing such a strange phenomenon as that on the bosom of their beloved Lake Erie. Meanwhile the citizens of Cleveland, perceiving the approach of the monster, hastened to the lake shore to examine it. "What

is it? What is it? Where did it come from? What makes it go?" queried one and another of the excited throng. "It's the steamboat! That's what it is!" cried others in reply. "Yes! Yes! It's the steamboat!" was the general shout, and with ringing cheers the people watched the first vessel propelled by steam that had ever traversed the waters of Lake Erie.

For thousands of emigrants the journey to the West was made simple by this pioneer of modern lake transportation. What a sigh of relief they must have breathed when they were able to put behind them the struggles with roads of all sorts, or of no sort, and let steam take them the remainder of the way to the desired haven!

The development of steamboats on the lakes led an early historian to exclaim:[13]

The West!—A name given only a few years since to a remote, boundless and unsettled wilderness, inhabited only by roving bands of wild Indians, and savage animals—visited only by the Indian trader, or some romantic spirit pleased with the novelty of an adventure into unknown regions,—a country which it appeared centuries must pass away before settlement and civilization would occupy it—has suddenly, as if by magic, with the powerful aid of steam, and the indomitable enterprise, industry and perseverance of a free people, with the blessings of free institutions, securing to all the fruits of their own labor, been reclaimed from the wilderness. All physical difficulties have been overcome, this vast region of country has been penetrated in all quarters. . . .

It remained for the Erie Canal to make easy the journey from Albany to Buffalo. As early as 1804 Gouverneur Morris had suggested this artificial waterway, which would divert trade from Canada and would be an important factor in linking the West to the East, and so supplying the cement of interest to prevent the catastrophe of which Washington gave a note of warning when he said:

The Western States stand, as it were, upon a pivot—the touch of a feather would turn them any way.

Years passed, however, before anything was done. It was hoped that Congress would undertake the building of the canal, but Congress did not see the way to do this. One enthusiastic writer[14] spoke of the disappointment of Congress that receipts from the sale of public lands had been so small, and suggested the building of the canal as a remedy. He said:

In relation to this subject the Canal must be viewed with great interest. It has even been estimated by very discerning calculators that should the national government make the whole Canal from the Hudson to the Lakes, at an expense of five millions of dollars, the rise it would produce in the sale of public lands must remunerate the disbursements of the nation in ten or fifteen years. This estimate, in all probability, is very nearly correct. Certain it is, that their value must depend on a disposition to settle them; and they must be settled and reclaimed from a wilderness state by emigrants from the eastern section of our union, and other thick settled parts of the country. What are now the greatest objections to taking up and inhabiting these public lands? The difficulties and expenses of emigration and the want of a ready market for surplus produce.

Remove these objections, and the stream of emigration would be broad, deep and constant, as that great and gigantic flood, sent forth from the Lakes, whose borders it would people. Towns, villages and cities would spring up, and emerge from the bosom of the wilderness, as though the soil was smitten by some potent and creative wand of enchantment. . . .

The character of the emigrants too will be much improved by our canal. A great proportion of the population which has poured into the western country for the last few years, has been honest, enterprising, but needy, and forced upon adventure by necessity. Their object has been, subsistence and comfort for their numerous families. But when ready markets, with easy and regular transportation

are opened to these countries, men of capital and men, too, of higher standing, as agriculturists, will be induced to leave an old for a new and more genial soil. Foreign emigrants of large fortunes will also be induced to cast a favorable eye on these tempting territories.

Excavations for this, the greatest work yet attempted in America, were begun in 1817. On October 23, 1819, the waterway was opened from Utica to Rome. In 1825 the finishing touches were put to what Hulbert calls a "forty-foot waterway in the center of a sixty-foot aisle from Lake Erie to the Hudson," much of which had to be cut through the virgin forest.

The part played by the Erie Canal in the development of the country is indicated by the fact that between 1820 and 1840 the population of New York State jumped from 1,372,812 to 2,428,921. Along the route of the canal towns were built, cities grew like mushrooms, and farm lands were developed. Pennsylvania gained somewhat, but Ohio was the greatest gainer, outside of New York. The towns in the Western Reserve grew rapidly. Indiana did not feel the impulse to a great extent, as, somehow, comparatively few of the emigrants who went by the northern route stopped within her borders. Illinois made a great growth between 1825 and 1830, and in the next ten years the advance was startling.

The majority of those who came from New England followed the Erie Canal, Lake Erie, and wagon roads onward.

Lois Kimball Matthews says:

So great was the influx of Puritan stock, that the personnel of representatives and senators from Illinois had by 1850 changed greatly and the revision of the State Constitution in 1847-8 provided for the adoption of the township system or the county system as the majority of voters might decide.[15]

Michigan's boom began in 1830. In 1837 emigrants were singing:

Then there's old Varmount, well, what d'you think of that?
To be sure the gals are handsome and the cattle very fat:
But who among the mountains, 'mid cloud and snow would stay,
When he can buy a prairie, in Michigania?
Yea, yea, yea, in Michigania.

. . . . .

Then there's the State of New York, where some are very rich;
Themselves and a few others have dug a mighty ditch.
To render it more easy for us to find the way
And sail upon the waters to Michigania.
Yea, yea, yea, to Michigania.

Lanman, in his history of Michigan, said in 1839 that the Erie Canal "unfolds a new avenue to the prosperity of Michigan," a territory which had been "obliged to grapple with the obstacles springing from its remote position, and the want of convenient modes of transportation of articles of large bulk on the land between Albany and Lake Erie." The opening of the canal provided for emigrants "cheap and easy transportation for themselves and their merchandise, and this line of communication continued to be crowded with settlers who broke up their establishments in the less generous soil of the East, and were advancing to plant themselves in the land of promise on the Lakes."

"To these New England emigrants Michigan owed its New England's character," Lois Kimball Matthews says in quoting Lanman. Then she concludes:

The Erie canal, then, was a very substantial aid in pushing the frontier farther to the west and the northwest. Owing its inception to a time when New York and Pennsylvania were on the frontier, its completion was the signal for making the more sparsely inhabited portions of those states as densely settled as the banks of the Hudson. It was by this route that the descendants of those Pilgrims and Puritans who had been frontier-builders in 1620 and 1630, pushed on to build states on new lines in the old Northwest.

Here they met descendants of that other line of pioneers who began their frontier-building upon the James River in 1607. Forced to yield in some points the New Englanders could force their own standards in some other respects, and so preserve certain of their traditions. To the Erie canal, then, may be ascribed, in no uncertain measure, certain distinctive Puritan traits and characteristics which have entered into the making of what is to-day the northeastern portion of our great "Middle West."

Journals of early travelers give interesting details of the trip through the Erie Canal. In 1826 Dr. Estes of the Rensselaer school of Troy, New York, chartered a canal boat to take sixteen or eighteen of his pupils on a natural history trip.[16]

This historian of the expedition said:

Besides clothing I carry with me a small trunk and a carpet-bag, the latter, in which the greater part of my goods are stuffed, will make a comfortable pillow, while my blue camblet cloak will serve as a bed.

The expense of the trip was not to exceed $20 for each person. The slow method of travel gave ample opportunity to make natural history observations along the road. The greatest delay came at the locks, owing to the number of boats by which they were thronged.

In June, 1827, Captain Basil Hall[17] with his wife and daughter, left the private stage by which they were going to Buffalo, that they might have a day's experience on the canal boat. Captain Hall wrote:

We left Schenectady in the canal packet, and were towed along at the rate of three miles and a half per hour upon the average. . . . We were fully under the avowed consciousness of being very happy, with a boundless field of novel interest stretching far before us.

Nothing on earth, however, it should seem, is without some drawback, and our day dreams accordingly were

much disturbed by the necessity of stepping hastily down off the deck as often as we had to pass under one of the innumerable little bridges built across the canal. Their height was barely sufficient for the boat to shoot through and at first, when called to by the steersman, "Bridge!—Passengers!—mind the low bridge!" it was rather amusing to hop down and then to hop up again; but by and by, this skipping about became very tiresome, and marred the tranquillity of the day very much.

There are two cabins in these canal barges; one of which is for the ladies, and really not very uncomfortable-looking. In the gentlemen's cabin there was no appearance of beds, only a line of lockers along each side. After supper, however, about 8 o'clock, I was surprised to see these lockers folded out into a range of beds. But what struck me as being extremely ingenious was a second or higher tier of sleeping births, formed by a number of broad shelves, as it were; little frames with laced sacking bottoms, hinged to the sides of the cabin midway between the roof or upper deck and the lower beds.

These airy resting places, or mats, were held in their horizontal position at night by two supporting cords fastened to the roof of the cabin, and, in the day time were allowed to hang down against the vessel's side like the leaf of a table.

One day on the canal was quite enough, and the stage was taken next day.

In 1829 Colonel William L. Stone, editor of the New York *Commercial,* used the canal.[18] He wrote:

Sept. 4. Left Utica . . . in a new and splendid canal packet boat for the West. She is truly a superior boat, fitted up with the elegance and taste of a North river steamer, though on a smaller scale.

Next day, at Syracuse, he exclaimed at the transformation, due to the Erie Canal, in large measure. He saw a city where nine years before he had seen but five or six

scattered tenements, "the village being surrounded by a desolate, poverty-stricken woody country, enough to make an owl weep to fly over it."

October 5. On way from Albion to Lockport. Stepping ashore a moment while the boat stopp't to water the horses in order to look more at the village, I was surprised to find on turning round that the boat was off, and a bend in the canal had thrown it out of sight, as if by magic. I lost some moments in the vain endeavor to get a horse to follow on; but was compelled to test my own speed, which, hindered with a heavy overcoat, and an asthmatic affection, was none of the fleetest. However, after running about a mile, I came near enough to hail the boat, at the moment I was so much exhausted that I could not have run another rod for an estate.

October 19 . . . Every berth and settee, and all the space on the floor was occupied before 10 o'clock, with horizontal exhibitions of the human frame divine; and a squalling child in the ladies' cabin and a bull-necked snoring man in the stern . . . banished refreshing sleep. It was a sad night for all, especially the ladies. *N. B.* Little children, and people who snore, have no business on board of a packet boat.

Mrs. Caroline Spencer went from New York to Niagara in 1835. At Schenectady she stepped on a canal boat. She said:[19]

The boat was exceedingly pleasant, and it seemed such a relief from the hot bustling steamboat and the close, hurried railroad car, to the quiet movement of the canal boat. The windows of the boat are sufficiently large to make the views pleasant from them.... We ascended several locks during the day, at each of which we had an opportunity of leaving the boat and walking a short distance if we chose.

In 1837 Harriet Martineau took passage on a canal boat at Utica. She was not altogether pleased:[20]

From "Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania"

FORTY FORT IN 1778

From "National Gallery of American Landscape"

ON A NEW YORK WATERWAY

From "The Magazine of American History"

OLD FORT VAN RENSSELAER, CANAJOHARIE, NEW YORK

From Schoolcraft's "Historical Conditions and Prospects of the Indians in the United States"

CHICAGO IN 1820

I would never advise ladies to travel by canal, unless the boats are quite new and clean; or, at least, far better kept than any that I saw or heard of on this canal. On fine days it is pleasant enough outside (except for having to duck under the bridges every quarter of an hour, under penalty of having one's head crushed to atoms, and in dark evenings the approach of the boatlights on the water is a pleasant sight; but the horrors of night and of wet days more than compensate for all the advantages these vehicles can boast.

The heat and noises, the vicinity of a compressed crowd, lying packed like herrings in a barrel, the bumping against the side of the locks, and the hissing of the water therein like an inundation, startling one from sleep; these things are very disagreeable. . . . If there be a duty more obvious than another on board a canal boat, it is to walk on the bank occasionally in fine weather, or, at least, to remain outside in order to air the cabin (close enough at best) and get rid of the scents of the table before the unhappy passengers are shut up to sleep there.

The appearance of the berths in the ladies' cabin was so repulsive that we were seriously contemplating sitting out all night, when it began to rain, so as to leave us no choice.

Charges of extortion were made by many of the emigrants and it is certain that in some cases these charges were justified by the facts. From the first, efforts were made to hold in check those who preyed on the travelers, but it seemed impossible to correct the trouble altogether. Even as late as 1847 [21] an official examination of witnesses by the state developed humiliating facts. A man whose business it was to forward Americans from New York owned:

It is a fact that I and others engaged in the business get all we can from passengers, except that I never shave a lady that is traveling alone, it is bad enough to shave a man. I have all I get over a certain amount which is paid to the transportation companies. . . . The passenger goes from here to Albany by steamboat; to Schenectady by railroad;

then by line boat to Buffalo; I have represented in many instances to passengers that they would be forwarded by packet on the canal; but when they arrived at Schenectady they were sent by line boat.*

* Line boats traveled at the sedate pace of two and a half miles an hour. Travelers who were willing to pay an extra rate of fare went by limited packet boats, which made few stops and thus were able to cover an average distance of something like the four miles which the state law allowed; they could go from Albany to Buffalo in six days.

III. ALL THE WAY TO THE MISSISSIPPI

When the hill of toil was steepest,
When the forest-frown was deepest,
  Poor, but young, you hastened here;
Came when solid hope was cheapest—
  Came a pioneer.
Made the western jungle view
  Civilization's charms;
Snatched a home for yours and you,
  From the lean tree-arms.
Toil had never ceased to doubt you,—
  Progress' path you helped to clear;
But To-day forgets about you,
And the world rides on without you—
  Sleep, old pioneer!

—Will Carleton.

THOSE who were able to travel by canal boat were not so well prepared for the struggle of pioneer life on the Western Reserve as those who toiled through the almost unbroken wilderness during the first days of New Connecticut. These hardy emigrants took as a matter of course such experiences as that of Rev. Joseph Badger, the first minister in the section, who spent one night in a tall tree, tied to a limb by his bandana, lest he fall during sleep, while a bear kept company with his horse at the foot of the beech.

A settler who had gone a day's journey to get food for his family left his wife and children at home:

Before he left the cabin was made to look forsaken—as though the family had suddenly removed from it.[22] Cooking utensils and such other implements as they possessed were hid in the woods. No fire was kindled. The slabs, split out of logs with the axe—called puncheons—which had been laid down as a floor, were taken up and thrown

confusedly around—principally piled in one corner of the building. Under these an excavation was made in the ground, and some bed clothes thrown down, where the woman and her child might be concealed if she saw signs that Indians were in the vicinity. Here this brave pioneer woman had slept, or rather watched one weary night. Early the next morning as she looked out stealthily through the chinks of the cabin, she perceived Indians lurking upon the edge of the clearing. She hastened with her infant child to her place of concealment under the floor. The Indians, when they supposed they had satisfied themselves that the cabin was forsaken, came in and examined the premises to see if anything were left worth appropriating. While they remained, the woman lay nursing her child to keep it from movement and noise. Once or twice the movement of the little one, it seemed to her, would surely betray her; but the talk and tramping of the Indians prevented their quick ears from catching the sound from beneath. In a short time they hastened away, fearing, perhaps, an ambush attack by the settlers. The husband returned, heard the story of his wife's peril, and removed his family to the "block-house," a frontier fort, and hastened to give warning to the pioneers that Indians were prowling upon their border.

Probably the quaintest figure of the early days in the Western Reserve was the mysterious Jonathan Chapman, who came into the territory in 1801 with a wagon load of apple seeds, gathered from the cider presses in Western Pennsylvania.[23]

From that day he seemed to have but one object in life —to see that the settlers, who had all they could do to look after the bare necessities of existence, were provided with young apple trees. He was always thinking of his young orchards, which he planted here and there, growing the trees from seeds. As he traveled from place to place he dreamed of the future when the whole Western Reserve would be filled with apple orchards. As "Johnny Appleseed," he was known far and near.

It was his way to keep just a little in advance of the new-

est settlements. On the sheltered banks of some stream he would set out a little nursery, making a slight enclosure, and taking steps to protect the tender shoots from destruction. He had dozens of these nurseries, which he visited as constantly as a trapper makes the rounds of his traps, and as lovingly as a mother goes at night from bed to bed in the home nursery. When the trees were ready for transplanting, he was accustomed to leave them in charge of some one as his agent, with instructions to sell them at a nominal price, or to give them to people who could pay nothing. Gradually he made his way farther westward, into Indiana and up to Michigan, but always he returned periodically to look after the orchards in the older settlements and to greet those who were enjoying the fruit for which he had spent himself so unselfishly.

Always there was a fresh supply of emigrants who followed Johnny Appleseed in his pilgrimages through the forests. The day came when his orchards invited them over into the Michigan Territory.

In the spring of 1833 the father of Mrs. Withey took his four little daughters to Richland, then Gull Prairie, Michigan. They did not need to toil through the Western Reserve, but were able to take the far easier journey by lake boat from Buffalo to Detroit. By ox wagon they went to their destination, where they lived in the typical settler's cabin. "How that house did look every time it rained!" Mrs. Withey said.[24] "We had to cover the beds with tin pans and dishes to catch the water."

Four years later Jesse Munro went from Buffalo, where he had paused for more than twenty years on his way from Vermont, through Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, to Michigan.[25] When he left Buffalo, in company with others, he had no idea of going to Michigan. Later his daughter wrote:

They had been "Michiganders," as they were called, returning to the state of New York. Their sallow com-

plexions and the tales they told of shaking with the fever and ague made my father think that Michigan was no place for him. Nevertheless they decided to see for themselves.

Much to their surprise they found the state satisfactory. Later he went back for his family. They traveled by steam to Detroit, and from there they went by wagon.

The first day out from Detroit, we went only ten miles. The road was simply terrible. There were places where there were half a dozen tracks where different travelers had endeavored to get around the deep mud holes, but each one seemed equally bad. The wagon wheels would sink below the hubs, and our team was powerless to draw the load. There was little travel through the country as inhabitants were far apart. Wherever there was an inhabitant we found hospitality. We were never obliged to go further for accommodations. We were asked to share with them what they had.

One place I remember where there was a large log house with very wide doors. After supper the doors were thrown open, the two being on opposite sides of the house; a yoke of oxen then drew a log ten feet long and three feet in diameter through one door and rolled it into the fireplace for a back log. Another log two feet through was drawn in and placed on top of the first one for a back stick; a third one of similar size by the same process was placed on large stones in place of andirons for a forestick; smaller split wood was then piled upon these logs and then there was a fire to last twenty-four hours, with a few additions of small sticks during the next day.

Finally the party were within six miles of their destination. It was necessary to clear a road through the forest for this distance. The best of the trees cut were saved for the log house. The lumber used in making the door and window casings was from the boxing of the furniture.

Among the records of pioneer days one of the most suggestive is that of A. H. Conant,[26] who started west in September, 1832, a month before he was twenty-one. He

went by canal to Saratoga, New York. At Schenectady he saw for the first time a railroad, on which were two cars, fastened together, and carrying from twenty to thirty passengers, all drawn by one horse at a speed of a mile in five minutes.

From Buffalo he went to Detroit by steam, and from Detroit to Chicago on foot. This he did both for reasons of economy and that he might see the country.

He started from Detroit on the worst roads he had ever seen. On the Cold Water Prairie he saw six deer in one herd. He stopped three days at Niles, a town of four stores and two taverns, where he built a chimney and taught a class of four young men some of the principles of stenography, and so made more than his expenses. The night after leaving Niles he was lost in a swamp and plunged about until his shouts were heard and he was rescued.

After crossing from Michigan to Indiana he stopped one night in Indiana at the house of a Frenchman who was married to a squaw and lived on the Indian lands, with no other houses for fifty miles. He devoted himself to fleecing travelers who either slept with him or stopped in the woods.

When the traveler was five days out from Detroit he reached Chicago, where there was nothing worth noting except Fort Dearborn. In his journal he expressed the opinion that the town would become a place of considerable importance.

After an hour he pushed on, and that night he slept with a wagoner under his wagon.

At the Du Page he was told that not less than one hundred houses had been built during three years in a circuit of twenty-five miles.

Near the Bureau river he lost his way, but found it by the light of the prairie fires that night.

Next day he discovered that the wolves in the region were very troublesome, destroying many sheep and hogs. Wild honey was so abundant on the bluff and river banks that bee-hunters sold it for three cents a pound.

One day he was lost on the prairie, because he was unable to see a single tree, "any more than if he had been in the middle of the Atlantic."

From this prospecting trip he returned to the East, and three years later he returned and settled on the banks of the Des Plaines river, about twenty miles northwest of Chicago. He kept a journal from January, 1836 to May, 1840. The entries were brief, but it is one of the truest pictures of frontier life available. Here are a few extracts:

1836, Jan. 1. Attended to the survey of my claim.
2. Drew rails.
3. Sunday. Wrote poetry.
4. Made shelves and split rails.
5. Went to Chicago with a load of potatoes.
6. Sold my potatoes for seventy-five cents a bushel.
7. Cut apples, worked at my house, husked corn.
8. Attended a meeting of settlers for securing to each man his present claim.
9. Cut rail timber.
10. Sunday. Went to Chicago.
11. Commenced thrashing.
12. Still thrashing.

1836 Attended a meeting called to get the mail route changed from Chicago to Green Bay, from the beach of the lake to Auxplaines River.

Brought in a deer . . . Made a coffin for Mrs. Dougherty, and helped to bury her. Made and bottomed chairs.

May 10. Mrs. Hoard and Betsy Kelsey arrived.
11. Planted corn and prepared for the wedding.
12. Married Betsy Kelsey.

June 3. Made a table, and borrowed six bushels of potatoes, to be paid back with interest in the fall.

June 4. Wife eighteen to-day. Made a few articles of furniture. Made a churn.

September Heard big wolves howling . . . Hunted deer . . . Worked at Shoemaking . . . Made a coffin for H. Dougherty . . . Plastered my house . . . Dressed pig and calves torn by wolves . . . Dug a well . . . Killed a badger . . . Killed a wolf . . . Corn half destroyed by blackbirds . . . Set out shade trees . . . Took up a bee-tree to hive for honey . . . Hunted deer.

1837. Made a ditching machine . . . Hunted panther . . . Made a chest of drawers . . . Went to a bridge-raising.

1838. Made a back-kitchen . . . Hewed timber for a barn . . . Made a wagon . . . Made a cheese-press . . . Sister Harriet died . . . Made a coffin for Sister Harriet . . . Attended Sister Harriet's funeral.

When, on May 15, 1837, Elbridge G. Fifield [27] joined a party of eleven persons, bound from Vermont for the Rock River valley, in Wisconsin Territory, they chose a route similar to that taken by Mr. Conant.

The party traveled by stage to Burlington, Vermont, and then went by steamer to Whitehall, New York. They took line-boats on the Northern Canal to Troy, and on the Erie Canal to Buffalo; thence they went by steamer to Detroit. As it was impossible to secure passage from Detroit to Chicago, a wagon was hired to take the women and children across Michigan to St. Joseph. The men walked.

From St. Joseph a small sailing vessel was taken for Chicago. There they stopped at the best hotel to be found; the women had beds, but the men slept on the floor, on Indian blankets.

They arrived in Milwaukee twenty-six days after leaving Vermont, the last stage of the journey being made by schooner.

Mr. Fifield started at once into the interior to a sawmill where he hoped to find work. Following the blazed trail and the wagon track, he went through the Milwaukee woods to Prairie Village (now Waukesha) where was a solitary double log-house. He found a house one mile farther along the road, but learned that there was not another habitation for thirty miles.

He had not advanced far along the thirty mile stretch when a man on horseback overtook him and proposed that they play the game called "ride-and-tie." "You take the pony, and put him through on a canter for a mile or so, then tie, and walk on," the explanation was made. "I will do the same, overtaking and passing you." The game was played throughout the journey.

At the sawmill he was employed to drive a four-ox-team. Thus he was much relieved, for he had left but $2.50 of the $42 he had borrowed in Vermont to pay the expenses of the trip.

During the summer he made a claim on the bank of Rock river. In December, 1837, he took an ax, a ham and a blanket, walked to his claim, and began to make the improvements necessary to hold the land until spring. For four weeks he chopped timber, split rails and built fences. Then he returned to work at the sawmill.

During the winter he picked enough cattail flags to make a bed, caught and salted a keg of fish, bought a yoke of oxen, and prepared to work the claim in the spring. In April, 1838, he borrowed the hind wheels of a wagon, put in a temporary tongue and box, loaded his shanty outfit, drove along the river, ferrying across twice, cut his own three-mile road through the timber, and reached his claim. The next day he took the borrowed wagon back down the river, and immediately returned to his land. There he cleared two acres, made a harrow with wooden teeth, and planted the land with corn and potatoes.

At this period transportation on the Wisconsin river was by the Durham boats, similar to those used on the Dela-

ware and Susquehanna rivers.[28] This was a curious catamaran of from fifty-five to sixty feet in length, ten to twelve feet beam, two and one-half feet deep, drawing eighteen to twenty inches, and carrying from twenty-five to thirty tons of freight.

The steering oar was hewn from a pine tree twenty feet long, and its blade was twelve inches wide and three or four feet long. The chief propelling power was the socket pole, handled by a strong man. This was made of ash, fifteen feet long. At the top was a button, designed to give the pressure on the shoulder of the strong man.

One day, when he was an old man, William Powell told the Secretary of the Wisconsin Historical Society of a sample trip with one of these boats.

Seven men compose my crew, for my boat is large and heavily loaded. Six is the ordinary crew, besides the captain or steersman. A three mile gait of the poleman moves the boat at each set a little more than its length, which gives, in ordinary water, a speed of over three miles an hour.

It requires as much skill and tact to handle the pole and get all there is in it of force as a propeller, as to use the car. Notice how the men set and handle the pole—those on the left side of the boat grasp this with the right hand just below the button (the socket being in the water), and with a twist of the wrist and the help of the right knee the pole is thrown into the right position. The button is then brought to the shoulder and the force applied. This is done so quickly and deftly that it seems like one motion. Upon reaching the stern of the walk-board the poleman quickly rises, gives the pole a twist to disengage it from the bottom, and at the same time turns and grasps it with his left hand, walks to the bow, and sets again. They must all set together and at the same time. The disengaged hand is always ready to grasp anything in its reach, either to increase the force of the push, or to save oneself from going overboard if the pole should slip on the bottom.

Along the shore were the claims of the first settlers:

They are from two to five or six acres wide, and extend back from the river eighty acres or more. Their owners have cleared and cultivated just enough to supply their present wants, leaving the original forest on either side. All that each Frenchman wanted was a narrow strip of land on the river front, where he could catch his fish (which he called his pork barrel), and the forest behind for wood and timber. As he cleared land he raised potatoes, wheat, oats and other grain, while with gun and rod he supplied the rest of his provender whether of fish, flesh, or fowl.

The route taken by Sarah Foote, pioneer of 1846, from Ohio to Wisconsin, was by road through Southern Michigan and Northern Indiana, as she indicated in her journal.[29] Of the start she said:

April 14, 1846. The last night for us in our old home in Wellington, Ohio, for all our things are packed, and all but what we most need have been sent on by water to Milwaukee. The rest of the things nearly fill a large wagon. Father, mother, Mary, Sarah, Orlena, Alvin and Lucy are to ride in the family buggy.

The experiences of the first day or two were pleasant. Then there was a halt at a wayside blacksmith shop to set a loose wagon tire. Two or three miles farther on the women were asked to leave the buggy, as the reach was broken. So we called to Alvin to bring the axe, and while we girls and mother walked on, they fixed the buggy good and strong with sticks that they cut, and a rope from the wagon.

Soon after crossing the line into Michigan the party came to a great swamp. We all walked most of the time, for the travelling was so hard for the horses that we had to stop and rest them very often. The swamp was only five miles in length, but we were nearly all the afternoon getting through.

Two days later one of the wagon wheels showed signs of collapse. It had already turned inside out, yet we were in

hopes to reach Chicago turnpike before it gave out. But about five o'clock in the afternoon it smashed down flat, and there we were in the road with the only building in sight, an old school-house. So here we concluded to stay over night while Father went on with the broken wheel and buggy to find a wagonmaker. We found an old stone fireplace in the schoolhouse and in this we cooked our supper, and spread it out on the high benches for tables, using the low ones for seats.

Soon the travelers rode for dreary miles through the sand hills, and longed for a sight of the lake whose waters they could hear. They did not pass through Chicago, but went to the west of the young city.

Several times during the journey they fell in with other movers, who wished to keep them company. But they outtraveled the first company, and the second company outtraveled them, for just after joining them they traded their horses for oxen, which would be of more use to them in the new home.

After miring in mud holes, slipping through the loose planks of a bridge, losing themselves in the forest at night, enduring the jolting caused by the desire of the buggy horses to jump across creeks rather than walk through the water, they reached Rush Lake, their journey's end. Next day they were comfortably fixed in a log house, sixteen by fourteen feet, "ready to begin life in the woods."

Those who write pioneer records of Wisconsin like to tell of Count Agoston Haraszthy, who left Hungary for America in 1840. It was his intention to go to Florida, but on shipboard he became acquainted with a German immigrant, bound for the Northwest. He agreed to accompany the German to Wisconsin.[30]

From New York they went to Albany, then by Erie Canal to Buffalo, and by steamer to Milwaukee. In Milwaukee the Hungarian bought three horses and secured an interpreter. With a plat of the land in hand, the men found their way to a point near Rock river, and built a log house

and a shed. Here they set up housekeeping as soon as their goods arrived from Milwaukee. An ox-team and some machinery were bought. The principal thing done that summer was to cut on the marshes a winter's supply of hay for the cattle. Their experiment at homemaking had a sad conclusion:

The region in which they settled has long been famous for soil fertility and also as a breeding-place for a great variety of mosquitoes. It seems that they were very troublesome of nights, and in that early day there was no available means for protection from their ravages. The pioneers suffered, and on a particular night a fire was kindled to smudge the pest back to its native heath in the adjacent marsh. But the mosquitoes were persistent, and in desperation Haraszthy took a wisp of dry hay, and lighting it, swung the torch about. A spark lit in the hay shed. In a moment the visible product of the days of toil on the wild-hay marsh was in flames. Several loaded pistols and double-barrelled guns had been deposited on the hay, and a keg of powder had been placed there to avoid the sparks that were inevitable in a cabin of primitive construction and household operations. The adventurers ran for their lives; the flames made a clean sweep of the permanent improvements; the guns, pistols and powder keg performed their functions in due time. But the horses and oxen were unscathed, and with these the pioneer set off to the westward . . . It is said that about the time of the fire catastrophe they learned that they were trespassers on the land they had occupied for a few months. The land-office had erred in the plat, for the tract had been entered by others the previous year.

At length they found their way to the bluffs of the Wisconsin river, where Haraszthy, after a long, hungry look, shouted: "Eureka! Eureka! Italia! Italia!"

Land was bought along the river and a log house was built. Later, in partnership with an Englishman Haraszthy bought the land on which the present Sauk City is built. The place was at first called Haraszthy.

On June 23, 1841, a frontier itinerant preacher wrote in his journal:

There is here a Hungarian Count—so he calls himself—who claims to have large quantities of money, and is expending it liberally in improvements. There is also an Englishman who claims to have been a Lord in the old country. He is in partnership with the Count. They both look like savages, wearing a long beard above as well as below the mouth. And they are the great men of the place, and others adopt their customs, and make themselves as ridiculous as possible.

Until 1848 the Hungarian Count prospered in Sauk City, but the day came when the restlessness so characteristic of the early emigrant led him to pick up stakes and go to the Pacific coast. He would have appreciated the answer given by another Wisconsin man to the question, "Where is the West?" "The West is where you are; the East is where your folks lived."

By his removal to California at a time when his business ventures in Wisconsin were prospering greatly, Haraszthy showed that he was one of the restless thousands of whom the Superintendent of the United States Census said, in his report for December 1, 1852:

The people are somewhat nomadic in character . . . and so strong is their passion for motion that the West itself supplies a population to the still farther West. Ohio sends 215,000 to the three states beyond her; Indiana attracts 120,000 from Ohio, but sends on 50,000 of her own; Illinois takes 95,000 from Ohio and Indiana, and gives 7000 to young Iowa; and that state, though not twenty years redeemed from the Indians, gains nearly 60,000 by the restlessness of the three, and, in its turn, breaks over the too feeble barriers of the Rocky Mountains to supply Utah and Oregon with 1200 natives of Iowa.

During the early years of the century emigrants bound for regions beyond the Mississippi were accustomed to make

use of river steamers, but during the thirties many crossed northern Illinois and went from there into Iowa.

One who knew well the roads of Indiana and Illinois during the years 1836 and 1837, has told what he saw:[31]

The roads would be literally lined with the long blue wagons of the emigrant slowly winding their way over the broad prairies—the cattle and hogs, men and dogs, and frequently women and children forming the rear of the van —often ten, twenty and thirty wagons in company. Ask them, when and where you would, their destination was the Black Hawk Purchase.

I well remember one evening in 1836 crossing the Military Tract in Illinois. . . . I encountered a settler camped for the night, as I turned the short angle of a neighboring thicket. The old lady had just built her camp fire, and was busily engaged in frying prairie chickens which the unerring rifle of her boy had brought to the ground; one of the girls was milking a brindle cow, and that tall girl yonder, with swarthy arms and yellow sunbonnet, was nailing the coffee-mill on the side of a scrub oak which the little boy had "blazed" out with his hatchet. There sat the old man on a log, quietly shaving himself by a six-penny looking-glass, which he had tacked to a neighboring tree. And yonder old decrepit man, sitting on the low rush-bottomed chair, was the aged grand-sire of all; better that his bones be left by the wayside than that he be left alone among strangers. He sat quietly smoking his pipe with all the serenity of a patriarch. This is Emigrating. 'Tis not going away from home; the home was there, that night, with the settlers on Camp Creek, under the broad canopy of heaven, by that gurgling brook where the cattle browsed, the dogs barked, and the children quietly slumbered.

The settlement of Iowa did not begin until 1833, the first purchase of land from the Indians having been made in 1832. Further purchases were made in 1836, 1837 and 1842. These fertile lands attracted so many emigrants that in May, 1839, the settlers were encouraged to found

Iowa City, the capital of the territory so recently held by the Indians.

The news of the founding of the capital sped to the east, and in those days before the California rush, Iowa became the westward point of the homeseeker and the fortune hunter.[32] Some came to speculate, others to stay. In the first bright summer, some slept under the trees of the forest with slumbers broken by the wolf's long howl, others dwelt in tents, and as cabins were erected the floors were covered at night with the tired pioneers who sought refuge from the chilly air. Old "Leanback Hall" was built of logs cut from the city plot, and, tradition says, was furnished with a single bed, large enough to accommodate thirty-six men. Many of the first settlers were from Ohio, and by instinct took to the woods, leaving the broad open prairies for later comers.

The first emigrants had to "pass through thickets and tangles of slough-grass, winding over prairies brilliant with rich-hued blossoms and fording bridgeless streams." Old Indian trails or the haphazard ox-wagon track were the best that could be found. But better roads were coming, for "Iowa's first delegate to Congress, driving by post stage from his corn field near Burlington to the national capital, secured an appropriation for the opening of a military road from Dubuque to Iowa City, which became the highway of travel to the interior."

The first settlers of Iowa naturally desired to attract to their neighborhood as many settlers as possible of the most promising kind. Among the efforts to do this was the publication in 1846 of a little book [33] calculated to make more acute the longing of the settlers to go to Iowa, or to awaken the desire for the venture in the breasts of those who had not begun to feel the call of the prairies. In this volume a section was devoted to a discussion of "Persons Best Qualified to Emigrate."

It is undoubtedly true that some descriptions of emigrants will succeed better in a *new* country than others. Those

who have been accustomed to a country life and to the labor of a farm are, of course, better fitted to cultivate land and endure hardships, *at first* attendant upon a residence in a frontier country, than artisans, traders and people whose habits of life have become somewhat delicate by a long residence in cities and work-shops. But every individual who to health and vigor of manhood joins perseverance and industry will ultimately prosper. Mechanics of all kinds cannot fail to do well in Iowa, for when not employed in cultivating their farms (if they choose to make one) they will find it quite easy and convenient to earn a little money by working at their various trades; they will likewise have the advantage of being able to improve their dwellings and repair their farming utensils, without expense. Married persons are generally more comfortable and succeed better in a frontier country than single men, for a wife and family, so far from being a burden to a western farmer, may always form a source of pecuniary advantage in the domestic economy of his household, independently of heightening the enjoyments of domestic happiness. . . .

Many is the *wife,* whose cheerful countenance now gladdens the fireside of the "Iowa farmer," that *once* beamed brightly in the gay saloons of the crowded city. . . . In fine, it must be the settler's own fault if he does not enjoy, in large abundance, every substantial comfort and enjoyment of life, and see around his frugal board all the choice blessings of a land flowing with milk and honey.

But many of the emigrants who in later years came as far as the border of Iowa turned north instead of going west. Across Illinois and Missouri they came to Rock Island, Dunleith (or Galena), and Prairie du Chien, and from one of these points took steamer up the Mississippi to make their homes in northern Wisconsin or Minnesota. In 1858, six years after 21,000,000 acres acquired from the Dakotas were thrown open for settlement, Minnesota was admitted to the Union; Wisconsin reached the dignity of statehood ten years earlier.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

(See Bibliography)

1. "Ohio as a Hospitable Wilderness," p. 527.
2. "History of the Holland Purchase," p. 323.
3. Ibid., p. 470.
4. "Between Albany and Buffalo," p. 309.
5. "A Retrospect of Western Travel," Vol. I, p. 29.
6. "Between Albany and Buffalo," p. 407.
7. "Travels on an Inland Voyage," Vol. I, pp. 2, 15.
8. "The Northwest Territory and the Western Reserve," p. 15.
9. "Ohio and Her Western Reserve," p. 219.
10. "A Letter Addressed to the People of Maryland."
11. "Ohio as a Hospitable Wilderness," p. 527.
12. "Real Stories from Our History," p. 237.
13. "Commerce of the Lakes," p. 6.
14. "Considerations of the Great Western Canal," p. 19.
15. "The Erie Canal and the Settlement of the West," p. 198.
16. "Journal of a Tour from Albany to Lake Erie," p. 279.
17. "Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828," Vol. I, p. 66.
18. "Journal of a Tour to Niagara in 1827," pp. 226, 237, 264.
19. "A Trip to Niagara in 1835," p. 332.
20. "A Retrospect of Western Travel."
21. "Report of the Select Committee of the New York Legislature," 1849.
22. "Experiences of Prairie Life in the Early Settlements and Cities of the West," p. 8.
23. "History of Ashland County, Ohio," p. 27.
24. "Personal Recollections of Early Days," p. 345.
25. "The Settlement of Clinton County," p. 360.
26. "Augustus Conant," p. 116.
27. "Some Pioneer Experiences in Jefferson County," p. 134.
28. "Pioneers and Durham Boats on Fox River," p. 187.
29. "A Wagon Journey from Ohio to Missouri in 1846," p. 188.
30. "Agoston Haraszthy," p. 224.
31. "A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846," p. 12.
32. "The Historic Capital of Iowa," p. 444.
33. "A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846," p. 62.

THE SANTA FÉ TRAIL

It wound through strange scarred hills, down cañons lone
Where wild things screamed, with winds for company;
Its milestones were the bones of pioneers,
Bronzed, haggard men, often with thirst a-moan,
Lashed on their beasts of burden toward the sea:
An epic quest it was of elder years,
For fabled garden or for good, red gold,
The trail men strove in days of iron to hold.
To-day the steam god thunders through the vast,
While dominant Saxons from the hurtling trains
Smile at the aliens, Mexic, Indian,
Who offer wares, sun-colored, like their past;
Dread dramas of immitigable plains
Rebuke the softness of the modern man;
No menace, now, the desert's mood of sand;
Still westward lies a green and golden land,
For at the magic touch of water blooms
The wilderness, and where of yore the yoke
Tortured the toilers into dateless tombs,
Lo! brightsome fruits, to feed a mighty folk.

—Richard Burton.

I. THE LURE OF GAIN

Two days had the train been waiting,
Laid off from the forward tramp,
  When the sick child drooped
  And died, and they scooped
Out a little grave near camp.

Outside of civilization,
Far from the abodes of men,
  Where the cactus blows
  And the wild sage grows,
In the haunts of the wild sage hen.

No trace in range of the vision,
No beautiful flowers bloom,
  But a waste of sand,
  In a desert land,
Surrounds the little tomb.

—John Krayshaw Kaye.

In 1800 Santa Fé, Mexico, had a population of about four thousand. A town of that size presents attractions to ambitious traders, especially if—as was true in this case—the merchants who have had a monopoly of the business of the community are taking advantage of the people by asking exorbitant rates for inferior goods.

Evidently the Mexican traders who took goods from the south to Santa Fé did not give a thought to the possibility of competition from the United States. So they were taken by surprise when, in 1812,* McKnight, Beard, Chambers and others, in all about a dozen, appeared in Santa Fé, after a tedious trip along the route which Spanish explorers had taken in the sixteenth century, which American trappers had also chosen in the early years of the eighteenth century.

* This date is given in "Commerce of the Prairies," though "The Old Santa Fé Trail" says the trip was made in 1815.

At once they were arrested on suspicion, the merchandise they had brought with them was confiscated, and they were thrust into prison. There they languished for nine years.

In 1821 Beard and Chambers made their way back to the United States in a canoe, by way of the Canadian Fork of the Arkansas river. The story of their adventures led an Ohio merchant named Glenn to make an expedition to Santa Fé, in 1821.

Beard and Chambers, after securing financial backing, ventured a second trip. This time the difficulties came almost at once. They were delayed, and were overtaken by winter. It was necessary to spend three months on an island, in the vicinity of the present town of Cimarron. During the winter part of the pack animals were lost by starvation and cold. As soon as it was possible to travel, they cached their goods and went to Taos, where they bought mules. With these they returned to the island, opened the cache, loaded the merchandise, and proceeded to Santa Fé.

Another expedition of 1821 was that of Captain Beckwell, who led four others by the western prairie route to Santa Fé. In 1822 he made a second trip with thirty men and $5000 worth of merchandise. The leader decided to take a more direct route than had as yet been attempted. His only guide was a compass.

Soon water gave out, and food became scarce. Dogs were killed for food. The men were nearly exhausted by thirst when a buffalo was killed. The stomach of the animal was full of water, and this saved the travelers. One of the company afterward declared that the draught from the stomach was the sweetest drink he had ever tasted. Their strength having been renewed in this unexpected manner, a number of the men were able to reach the Arkansas river, where they filled their canteens. The remainder of the journey to Taos and Santa Fé was without incident.

These early companies had pack animals, but in 1824 a party of some eighty travelers employed twenty-five wheeled

vehicles as well as pack mules. The journey was accomplished with comparative ease. "The road, indeed, appears to have presented fewer obstacles than any ordinary road of equal length in the United States." [1]

This successful journey by wagon was an argument in favor of Thomas H. Benton's proposal, made to Congress in 1824, that a road be built from the Missouri to Santa Fé. The road was surveyed in 1825 and 1826, and was found to be 775 miles in length. Thus was completed the route from the Mississippi to Santa Fé, the first stage of which was Boone's Lick, from St. Charles to Franklin, the road over which marched many of the early emigrants west of the Mississippi. Before long, wagons manufactured in Pittsburg became the favorite means of transport on the trail. These were "usually drawn by eight mules or the same number of oxen." Before many years even heavier wagons were introduced, these being drawn by ten or twelve mules.

In 1829 oxen were first employed on the road, and to the surprise of the traders they were found to do work equal to the mules. Within a year or two perhaps one-half of the wagons were drawn by oxen.

At first the Indians paid little attention to the caravans, but aggressions by the traders, the opening of the trail by the government, and aroused cupidity were responsible for the beginning of serious aggression. Caravans were attacked, goods were seized and men were killed.

In 1828 a caravan of one hundred and fifty mules and horses and five wagons, carrying a large amount of silver coin, was stopped at Upper Cimarron Springs by Comanches. There was no escape, except by boldly riding through the camp. "Assuming the bravest look possible, and keeping our rifles in position for immediate action, we started on the perilous venture.[2] The chief met us with a smile of welcome, and said, in Spanish, 'You must stay with us to-night. Our young men will guard your stock, and we have plenty of buffalo meat.' "

The traders tried to escape, but the Indians seized their bridle reins and began to fire on them, yet most of the company succeeded in getting away. "We succeeded in fighting them off until we had left the camp half a mile behind," the writer of the account continued, "and as darkness had settled down on us, we decided to go into camp ourselves. We tied our gray bell-mare to a stake, and went out and jingled the bell, whenever any of us could do so, thus keeping the animals from stampeding. We corralled our wagons for better protection, and the Indians kept us busy all night, resisting their furious charges."

Next day five miles were made, though the fight with the Indians was continuous. Four days passed in the same way, until the traders were almost exhausted for lack of sleep. Then came a night attack, when the horses and mules were stampeded, and every animal was lost.

It was decided to abandon the wagons and silver, and to seek safety in flight. Taking as much of the silver as they could carry, the survivors stole from the camp. For two days and nights they traveled on. When they were weak from loss of food they buried the silver on a small island in the Arkansas river. Fortunately they shot a buffalo and an antelope and ate a hearty meal, though without salt.

A few days later they found the Trail, from which they had wandered. They were nearly exhausted from exposure and loss of sleep, so they decided to send five of the party for help to Independence.

The two hundred mile journey of the relief party was most difficult. The weather was cold, and the men had little clothing and no blankets. Their feet were partially bare, and bloodmarks stained the Trail. Deafness and thirst added to their misery. Several were ready to give up, when muddy water was found. At last they reached a cabin fifty miles from Independence where some women were cooking pumpkin. This was eaten ravenously.

"We had subsisted for eleven days on one turkey, a coon,

a crow, and some elm bark, with an occasional bunch of wild grapes, and the picture we presented to these good people they will probably never forget," the story of the escape continued. "We had not tasted bread or salt for thirty-two days."

Next day Independence was reached, and seven men sent back on the trail for the relief of the remainder of the party. The men were found just in time to save them from starvation. Their exhaustion is apparent from the statement that not more than two of them were found together. Two were found one hundred miles from Independence; the others were scattered along the Trail for fifty miles.

With an escort of soldiers, the leaders of the caravan returned to the island where the silver had been buried. The coin was found exposed, for the water had washed the earth away. But no one had seen the treasure, for no one had passed that way.

In 1829, in response to an appeal for protection, three troops of United States infantry were provided as an escort for a caravan from Franklin, Missouri, to the Mexican border, on the Arkansas. All was quiet until the company was within a few miles of the boundary. Then there was a sharp skirmish with the Comanches.

In 1842 the Trail was the scene of further military exploits. In that year a company of Texans went toward Santa Fé to rob caravans going from the United States to Mexico. Their activity called out the soldiers once more.

From that day until 1846, when the Army of the West went over the Santa Fé Trail for the conquest of New Mexico, there was an interruption in the activity of the traders. In 1843 President Santa Anna ordered that the frontier custom house should be closed to commerce. But this restriction was removed when the territory passed to the control of the United States.

During the twenty-two years before Santa Anna's embargo the trade on the Trail became quite large. In 1822

$15,000 worth of goods was carried by seventy men; in 1824 the amount of the traffic was $35,000, while one hundred men and twenty-six wagons were engaged; in 1825 the value of the goods carried increased to $65,000, while one hundred and thirty men and thirty-seven wagons were employed; in 1828 the amount became $150,000, carried by two hundred men and one hundred wagons; in 1831 $250,000 was the value of the traffic, and three hundred and twenty men and one hundred and thirty wagons were employed; in 1843, the year of the embargo, $450,000 worth of goods were taken to Santa Fé, in two hundred and thirty wagons, by three hundred and fifty men.

Josiah Gregg, who wrote[3] in 1844, indicated his belief that the traffic was done for all time. But with the close of the war with Mexico it began to increase rapidly. Soon thousands of wagons made the trip annually. Each wagon could carry from five to six thousand pounds. As freight to Santa Fé was ten dollars per hundred pounds, the profits were large. The trip required from eighty to ninety days.

The journey by stage required two weeks. The fare was $250. When the Santa Fé trade was at its height the man who manufactured all the ox-yokes made fifty thousand dollars a year.

Until 1832 the start was made from Franklin, Missouri; then Independence became the Missouri terminus of the Trail. After the war with Mexico, Westport (Kansas City) became popular as a starting point with many of the traders.

Traders were not the only men who made use of the Santa Fé Trail. Emigrants by hundreds and thousands used the route, or a portion of it. Many of those who sought Southern California went by way of Santa Fé; the road to California lay for some distance along the Santa Fé Trail, and many started for Oregon the same way.

II. FACING FAMINE AND FIGHTING INDIANS

Those western pioneers an impulse felt,
Which their less hardy sons scarce comprehend;
Alone in Nature's wildest scenes they dwelt,
Where crag and precipice and torrent blend;
And stretched around the wilderness as rude
As the red rovers of the solitude
Who watched their coming with a hate profound
And fought with deadly strife for every inch of ground.
—Frederick W. Thomas.

On May 21, Thomas J. Farnham and sixteen others arrived in Independence, on their way to the Oregon Territory. Some were health seekers, some sightseers, and a few were home-seekers. Farnham gave in the story of his travels an interesting picture that should not be buried in a volume long out of print:[4]

Pack mules and horses and pack-saddles were purchased and prepared for service. Bacon and flour, salt and pepper, sufficient for 400 miles, were secured in sacks; our powder-casks were wrapped in painted canvas; and large oilcloths were purchased to protect them and our sacks of clothing from the rains; our arms were thoroughly repaired; bullets were moulded; powder-horns and cap-boxes filled, and all else done that was deemed needful . . .

But before leaving this little woodland town, it will be interesting to remember that it is the usual place of rendezvous and outfit for the overland traders to Santa Fé and other Mexican States. In the month of May of each year, the traders congregate here, and buy large Pennsylvania wagons and teams of mules to convey their calicoes, cotton, cloth, boots, shoes, &c, &c, over the plains to that distant and hazardous market. And it is quite amusing to a "green-horn," as those are called who have never been

engaged in the trade, to see the mules make their first attempt at practical pulling. They are harnessed in a team, two upon the shaft, and the remainder two abreast in long swinging iron traces. And then, by way of initiary intimation that they have passed from a life of monotonous contemplation, in the seclusion of their nursery pastures, to the bustling duties of the Santa Fé Trade, a hot iron is applied to the thigh or shoulder of each with an embrace so cordially warm as to leave there, in blistered perfection, the initials of the last owner's name. This done, a Mexican Spaniard, as chief muleteer, mounts the right hand wheel mule, and another the left hand one of the span next the leaders, while four or five others, as foot-guards, stand on either side, armed with whips and thongs. The team is straightened—and now comes the trial of passive obedience. The chief muleteer gives the shout of march, and drives his long spurs into the sides of the animal that bears him; his companion before follows his example, but there is no movement. An unearthly bray is the only response of these martyrs to human supremacy. Again the team is straightened; again the bloody rowel is applied; the body-guard on foot raise the shout; and all as one apply the lash. The untutored animals kick and leap, rear and plunge, and fall in their harness. In fine, they act the mule, and generally succeed in breaking neck or limb of some one of their number, and in raising a tumult that would do credit to any order of animals accustomed to long ears.

After a few trainings of this description, however, they move off in fine style. And, although some luckless one may at intervals brace himself up to an uncompromising resistance of such encroachment upon his freedom, still, the majority preferring passive obedience to active pelting drag him onward, till like themselves he submits to the discipline of the traces.

On the 30th of May we found ourselves prepared to move for Indian Territory. Our pack-saddles being therefore girded upon the animals, our sack of provisions, &c, snugly lashed upon them, and protected from the rain that had begun to fall, and ourselves well mounted and armed, we took the road that leads southwest from Independence

in the direction of Santa Fé. But the rains that had accompanied us daily since we left Peoria, seemed determined to escort us still, our ill-natured scowls to the contrary notwithstanding. We had traveled only three miles when such torrents fell that we found it necessary to take shelter in a neighboring school-house for the night.

The following morning was clear and pleasant . . . We crossed the . . . Big-Blue . . . and approached the border of the Indian domain. All were anxious now to see and linger over every object that reminded us we were still on the confines of . . . civilization . . . The last cabin at length was approached . . . Before us were the treeless plains of green, as they had been since the flood—beautiful, unbroken by bush or rock, unsoiled by plough or spade. . . .

Having traveled about twenty-five miles over the beautiful prairie, we halted on the banks of a small stream . . . At this encampment final arrangements were made for our journey over the Prairies. To this end provisions, men, ammunition, packs and pack-saddles were overhauled, and an account taken of our common stock of goods for trading with the Indians. . . . We determined to remain here a while and send back to the Kauzaus Indian mill for 200 pounds of flour . . . Officers were also chosen and their powers defined, and whatever leisure was found from these duties, during a tarry of two days, we spent in regaling ourselves with strawberries and gooseberries. . . .

Our friends having returned from the mill . . . we left Elm Grove on the 3d of June, traveled along the Santa Fé trail about 15 miles, and encamped . . . We remained here a day and a half, waiting for two of our number who had gone in search of a horse that had left our encampment at Elm Grove. . . .

Our road on the 5th was through a nearly level prairie . . . A skirt of black oak timber occasionally lined the horizon or strayed up a deep ravine near the trail. The extreme care of the traders in the overland Santa Fé trade was everywhere noticeable, in the fact that the track of their richly-loaded wagons never approached within musket-shot of these forests of timber. Fifteen miles' march brought

us to our place of encampment. A certain portion of the company, allotted to that labor, unpacked the company's mules of the common-stock property, provisions, ammunition, &c.; another portion pitched the tent; another gathered wood and kindled a fire; while others brought water, and still others put seething-pots and frying-pans to their appropriate duties. So that . . . a few minutes transformed our little cavalcade from a moving troop into an eating, drinking and joyous camp. A thunder storm visited us during the night . . . The rain came in floods; and our tent, not being ditched around, was flooded soon after the commencement of the storm, and ourselves and baggage thoroughly drenched.

The next day we made about 15 miles through the mud and rain, and stopped for the night near a solitary tree upon the bank of a small tributary of the Kanzas river. Here fortune favored our fast-decreasing larder. One of the company killed a turtle, which furnished us an excellent supper. . . .

On the 7th . . . our company was divided into two messes, nine in one, and eight in the other. On the ground, with each a tin pint cup and a small round plate of the same material; the first filled with coffee, tea, or water, the last with fried side bacon, and dough fried in fat; each with a butcher-knife in hand and each mess sitting, tailor-like, around its own frying-pan, eating with the appetite of tigers. . . .

There were encamped near us some wagoners on their return to Missouri, who had gone out to Council Grove with the provisions and that part of the goods of the Santa Fé traders which the team of untrained mules had been unable to draw when they left Independence. . . .

Three of my valuable men had determined to accompany the wagoners to the States. And as they filed off . . . an expression of deep discouragement shaded every face . . . But . . . the determination to penetrate the valleys of Oregon soon swept away every feeling of depression; and, two hunters being sent forward to replenish our larder, we trailed happily onward.

. . . At night-fall we found ourselves on a height over-

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THE BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

MARKER ON THE
SANTA FÉ TRAIL

From Gregg's "Commerce of the Prairies"

WAGONS PARKED FOR THE NIGHT

From Schoolcraft's "Historical Conditions and Prospects of the Indians in the United States"

NEAR FORT DEFIANCE, NEW MEXICO

looking a beautiful grove . . . This we supposed to be Council Grove. On the swell of a hill are the remains of an old Kauzaus encampment . . . We fired signal guns for the hunters, pitched our tents, took up for fuel the boughs which had been used by the Indians in building their wigwams, and proceeded to cook our supper. This encampment was made by the Kauzaus six years ago, when on their way South to their annual buffalo-hunt . . . About 9 o'clock our signal guns were answered by the return of our hunters. They had scoured the country all day in quest of game, but found none. Our hopes were somewhat depressed by the result. We had but 100 pounds of flour and one side of bacon left; and the buffalo, by the best estimate we could make, were still 300 miles distant. The country between us and these animals, too, being constantly scoured by Indian hunters, afforded us but little prospect of obtaining other game. . . . Having put ourselves on short allowance and looked at our horses as the means of preventing starvation, we sought rest for the fatigue of the next day's march.

Council Grove derives its name from the practice among the traders, from the commencement of the overland commerce with the Mexican dominion, of assembling here for the appointment of officers and the establishment of rules and regulations to govern their march through the dangerous country South of it. They first elect heir commander-in-chief. His duty is to appoint subordinate heads and to divide the owners and men into watches, and to assign them their several hours of duty in guarding the camp during the remainder of their perilous journey. He also divides the caravan into two parts, each of which forms a column when on march. In these lines he assigns each team its place in which it must always be found. Having arranged these several matters, the Council breaks up; and the Commander, with the guard on duty, moves off in advance to select the track and anticipate approaching danger. After this guard the head teams of each column lead off about eight feet apart and the others follow in regular lines; rising and dipping gloriously; 200 men, 100 wagons, 800 mules; shoutings and whippings and whistlings and cheerings, are

all there; and, amidst them all, the hardy Yankees move happily onward, to the siege of the mines of Montezuma. Several objects are gained by this arrangement of the wagons. If they are attacked on march by the Cumanche cavalry or other foes, the leading teams file to the right and left and close the front, and the hindermost by a similar movement close the rear; and thus they form an oblong rampart of wagons laden with cotton goods that effectually shields teams and men from the small arms of the Indians. The same arrangement is made when they halt for the night.

Within the area thus formed are put, after they are fed, many of the more valuable horses and oxen. The remainder of the animals are "staked"—that is, tied to stakes, at a distance of 20 or 30 yards, around the line. The ropes by which they are fastened are from 30 to 40 feet in length, and the stakes to which they are attached are carefully driven at such distances apart as shall prevent their being entangled one with another.

Among these animals the guard on duty is stationed, standing motionless or crouching so as to discover every moving spot upon the horizon of night. The reasons assigned for this . . . are that a guard in motion would be discovered and fired upon by the cautious savage . . . and, further, that it is impossible to discern the approach of an Indian, creeping among the grass in the dark, unless the eye of the observer is so close to the ground as to bring the whole surface lying within the range of vision between it and the line of light around the lower edge of the horizon. If the camp be attacked, the guard fires and retires to the wagon. The whole body then take position for defence; at one time sallying out, they recover their animals from the grasp of the Indians; and at another, concealed behind the wagons, they load and fire upon the intruders . . . And many were the bloody battles fought on the trail; and such were some of the anxieties and dangers that attended and still attend the "Santa Fé Trail." And many are the graves along the track, of those who have fallen before the terrible cavalry of the Cumanches.

. . . Ten miles on the day's march, the animals were

tugging lustily through the mud, when the advance guard shouted, "Elk! Elk!" and "steak broiled" and "ribs broiled" and "marrow bones" and "no more hunger" and "Oregon forever, storm or live" as an appointed number of my companions filed off to the chase.

About six o'clock we overtook a company of Santa Fé traders commanded by Captain Kelley. The gloom of the atmosphere was such when we approached his camp that Captain K. supposed us Indians, and took measures accordingly to defend himself. Having stationed his twenty-nine men within the barricade formed by his wagons, he himself, accompanied by a single man, came to reconnoitre. And he was not less agreeably surprised to find us whites and friends than we were at the prospect of society and food.

. . . We encamped at sunset on the banks of a branch of the Arkansas. Our ration was now reduced to one-eighth of a pint of flour to each man . . . A herd of oxen and mules were feeding and lowing upon the opposite bank of the stream. They belonged to the Messrs. Bents, who have a trading post upon the Arkansas. One of the partners and thirty odd men were on their way to St. Louis with ten wagons laden with peltries. They were also driving down 200 Santa Fé sheep for the Missouri market. These animals are usually purchased from the Spaniards; and if the Indians prove far enough from the track to permit the purchaser to drive them into the States, his investment is unusually profitable . . . On meeting the gentlemen in charge of the wagon before spoken of, he informed us that he had lost thirty Mexican mules and seven horses; and desired us, as we intended to pass his post, to recover and take them back. . . .

. . . The country in which we now were was by no means sacred to life, limb or property. The Pawnee and Cumanche war parties roam through it during the spring and summer months for plunder and scalps. The guard . . . was therefore carefully stationed at nightfall among the animals around the tents, and urged to the utmost careful watchfulness. But no foes molested us. In the expressive language of the giant of our band, prefaced always with an

appropriate sigh and arms akimbo, "We were not murdered yet."

The 14th, 15th and 16th (June) were days of more than ordinary hardships. With barely food enough to support life—drenched daily by thunder storms and by swimming and fording the numerous drains of this alluvial region, and worried by the continual packing and unpacking of our animals, and enfeebled by the dampness of my couch at night, I was so much reduced when I dismounted from my horse on the evening of the 16th, that I was unable to loose the girth of my saddle or spread my blanket for repose.

Fortunately the buffalo were seen several days later, and a fat bull was killed. Ten days later the buffalo were so thick that it appeared oftentimes extremely dangerous even for the immense cavalcade of the Santa Fé traders to attempt to break its way through them. We traveled at the rate of fifteen miles a day. The length of sight on either side of the trail, 15 miles; on both sides, 30 miles:—15x3—45x30—1,350 square miles of country so thickly covered with these noble animals than when viewed from a height it scarcely afforded a sight of a square league of its surface.

On July 11 the party divided. Part went on to Santa Fé. Part turned north toward the mountains and Oregon. This was in the vicinity of Fort William.

III. WHEN THE TRAIL WAS IN ITS GLORY

On and on the compact ranks,
With accessions ever waiting, with the places of the dead quickly fill'd,
Through the battle, through defeat, moving yet and never stopping,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

—Walt Whitman.

Edwin Bryant, who left Independence May 5, '846, bound for Oregon, did not continue on the Santa Fé Trail so long as Farnham. He left it after eight days, while Farnham followed it for seven weeks. The diary of Bryant's eight days [5] is full of interest. He left Independence May 5, with one wagon and the oxen. Within three hours the wagon stalled twice, once in the mud,—from this predicament relieved by a passing negro with a well-trained yoke of oxen; the second time the wagon ran off one side of a bridge—relieved here by a Santa Fé teamster and his ox.

May 6. Three Santa Fé wagons which passed our camp last night during the storm, were stalled in the road just beyond us. . . . At two o'clock we reached an encampment composed of the wagons of Colonel Russell and the family of Mr. West, of Calloway County, Missouri, and some others. They were emigrating to California. The wagons numbered in all about fifteen. When our wagon arrived it was drawn up alongside the others, and our oxen released to feed upon the grass of the prairies. I visited the tents of our fellow-travellers, and found the ladies busily employed, as if sitting by the fireside which they had recently left for a long and toilsome, if not a dangerous, journey and a country of which they knew but little. Mrs. West, a

lady of seventy, and her daughter, Mrs. Campbell, were knitting. Mr. West, the head of the family, was originally from Virginia, and was, he told me, seventy-five years of age. His four sons and son-in-law, Major Campbell, having determined to emigrate to California, he and his wife had resolved to accompany them. Mr. and Mrs. West, although so much advanced in life, appeared to be as resolute as the youngest of the family, and to count with certainty upon seeing the Eldorado of the Pacific. The former realized this expectation—the latter did not.

Fear was felt as to the Mormons, who were traveling West in large numbers. It was rumored among the emigrants, for instance, that "five thousand Mormons were crossing or had crossed, the Kansas river; that they marched with ten brass field-pieces, and that every man of the party was armed with a rifle, a bowie knife, and a brace of large revolving pistols. It was declared that they were inveterately hostile to the emigrant parties; and when the latter came up to the Mormons, they intended to attack and murder them, and appropriate to themselves their property.[6]

Mr. Bryant was too wise to pay much attention to these rumors. "With proper circumspection on our part no difficulties with them need be apprehended," he decided.

On May 8, early in the afternoon, an encampment of several emigrant wagons was passed, and later in the day ten emigrant wagons were overtaken, with a numerous drove of cows and other stock. In the evening when camp was made, two wagons were on the ground before them. This party was from St. Louis, while a company from Michigan was encamped in a grove of timber about a mile distant.

On May 9 a pause was made to fish and to rearrange the provisions and equipment. By night other wagons had come up, until there were thirty-four in the encampment. Therefore

it was proposed that the party for California should be organized and officered . . . Singular as it may appear,

there is as much electioneering here for the captaincy of this expedition as there would be for the generalship of an army, or for the presidency of the United States. The many interests of the ambitious aspirants to office and the vehemence with which their claims are urged by their respective friends argue unfavorably to harmony on the journey.

Our camp this evening presents a most cheerful appearance. The prairie, miles before us, is enlivened with groups of cattle, numbering six or seven hundred, feeding upon the fresh green grass. The numerous white tents and wagon-covers, before which the camp-fires are blazing brightly, represent a rustic village; and men, women and children are talking, playing and singing around them with all the glee of light and careless hearts. While I am writing, a party at the lower end of the camp is engaged in singing hymns and sacred songs.

May 12. All the wagons and teams were this morning inspected by a committee appointed for that purpose. It appeared from the report that the number of wagons belonging to the company was 63; of men 119; of women 59; of children, male and female, 110; pounds of breadstuffs, 58,484; of bacon, 38,080; of powder, 1,065; of lead, 2,557; number of guns, mostly rifles, 144; pistols, 94. The number of cattle was not reported, but I estimate it at 700, including the loose stock, and 150 horses.

May 13. I met, this afternoon, three returning Santa Fé trading companies; two of them with three or four wagons, and the other with twelve wagons, all drawn by mules. They were driving before them several large herds of mules, in the aggregate about one thousand. The mules were so lean that the ribs of most of them were defined with precision, and the bones of some of them appeared to have worn through the flesh. I never saw a more ghostly collection of animals. . . .

I stopped and conversed some time with one of the leading men of the companies . . . He said that the principal part of the mules had been driven from Chihuahua, and had cost them twenty dollars per head; that they were taken in exchange for such commodities as had been carried out

with them, and he expected to dispose of them at a profit on his arrival in the settlements of Missouri. He said that the journey to Santa Fé and Chihuahua was one of great fatigue and hardship, as he knew, but that the journey to California was infinitely more so; that our lives would be shortened ten years by the trip, and before we returned, if we experienced such good fortune, our heads would be white, not with the frosts of age, but from the effects of exposure and extreme hardships.

That afternoon the party turned from the Santa Fé Trail toward California.

During the years immediately following the discovery of gold in California the number of emigrants who made use of the Santa Fé Trail was large, in spite of the great difficulties of the way beyond the New Mexico city. Bayard Taylor [7] told of meeting some of these pilgrims who took passage from San Diego for San Francisco on the vessel which had carried him from New York:

The stories of these adventurers by the way sounded more marvellous than anything I had heard or read since my boyish acquaintance with Robinson Crusoe, Captain Cook, and John Ledyard. Taking them as the average experience of the thirty thousand emigrants who last year crossed the Plains, this California Crusade will more than equal the great military expeditions of the Middle Ages in magnitude, peril and adventure. The amount of suffering which must have been endured in the savage mountain passes and herbless deserts of the interior cannot be told in words. Some had come by way of Santa Fé and along the savage hills of the Gila; some, starting from Red River, had crossed the Great Stake Desert and taken the road from Paso del Norte to Tucson or Sonora.

For twenty years long the emigrants by the Santa Fé Trail had to keep their eyes open for Indians. Relief did not come until General Sheridan's campaign against the savages of the plains in 1868 and 1869.

The traveler who desires to see a bit of the old trail—almost every mile of which was marked by anguish and blood—can have his wish satisfied if he will look carefully from the cars of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad three miles west of Walnut Creek, where the trail may be seen as it passes down the slope toward the creek.

Since 1880, when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad was opened, the Trail has been a memory. But it is a glorious memory.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

(See Bibliography)

1. "Commerce of the Prairies," Vol. II, p. 25.
2. Newspaper Account, as Copied in "The Old Santa Fé Trail," p. 69.
3. "Commerce of the Prairies," Vol. II, p. 160.
4. "Travels in the Great Western Prairies," p. 4.
5. "What I Saw in California," p. 21.
6. Ibid., p. 15.
7. "El Dorado," Vol. I, p. 47.

CHAPTER SIX: ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL

Westward the Oregon flows, and the Walleway and Owybee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the Nebraska;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sand and rocks, and swept by the wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the roebuck;
Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise groves from the margin of swift-running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side,
While over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

I. THE WAGON WHEELS OF WHITMAN

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the trains are marching
Westward, still westward day by day;
Standing guard the livelong night,
Ever ready for the fight,
Here to plant the flag, three thousand miles away."

Not until about 1832 did the Oregon Trail begin to rival the Santa Fé Trail as a route to the West, though it had been traced roughly in 1810 by Wilson Price Hunt. As chief agent of John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company, Hunt went from the Missouri to the Pacific in charge of a party of fur traders. After following the route of Lewis and Clark up the Missouri as far as the towns of the Mandan Indians, he plunged boldly into the unmapped wilderness and finally reached the Columbia, going by way of the Black Hills, the Bighorn Mountains, and the Snake river. To a portion of this route was given later the name, "The Oregon Trail."

Later fur traders and adventurers struck out from the lower Missouri river, making their start at Independence. Still later, when the tide of emigration to the West by this route set in, Independence and Weston were starting points from 1842 to 1846. Many later parties started from here, though as early as 1846 St. Joseph became popular with emigrants who came from Iowa, Illinois and Indiana. After 1850 Council Bluffs was a favorite point for beginning the long journey.

The route, in general, of those who went to the Pacific Coast by way of the Oregon Trail has been outlined thus: [1]

The Trail, 2400 miles long, led up the Platte and its North Fork to Fort Laramie, around the Black Mountains

by the Sweetwater, to South Pass (7490 feet elevation), over this dip to the Green River, by Muddy Creek, to a pass over the divide, rimming the Bear River Valley on the east. This was the highest point of the whole long trail, 8230 feet elevation. The road dropped down the Bear River to the most northern point of its course and then crossed over an insignificant watershed to Port Neuf River and Fort Hall on the Snake. Thus far the way was easy. To South Pass the ascent was so gradual that it was difficult to tell when the summit was reached, and the grassy road to the higher pass over the Bear River divide was only at times steeper than the national road in the Alleghenies.

Fort Hall was 1200 miles from Independence and only a little over halfway to the mouth of the Columbia. But the last part of the road was the hardest. For three hundred miles across the desert without a fertile spot or any pasturage the trail followed the Snake River, whose canyon walls for days together barred the thirsting herds from its rushing waters. From Salmon Falls the road, avoiding a wide bend of the river, cut across the plains to Fort Boisé . . . whence it continued northward down the Snake again to Burnt River . . . The road turned off up the Burnt River Canyon, over a dividing ridge to the Upper Powder River, whose transverse valley pointed the line of easiest ascent up the steep slopes of the Blue Mountains. The range once surmounted by double teams, the Umatilla opened an easy path down to the Walla Walla and the great bend of the Columbia.

This highway of travel has been spoken of [2] as "the most remarkable known to history. . . . Considering the fact that it originated with the spontaneous use of travellers; that no transit ever located a foot of it; that no level established its grades; that no engineer sought out the fords or built any bridges or surveyed the mountain passes, that there was no grading to speak of nor any attempt at metalling the road bed; and the general good quality of these two thousand miles of highway will seem most extraordinary. Father de Smet, who was born in Belgium, the

home of good roads, pronounced the Oregon Trail one of the finest highways in the world.

For many years men were not lacking who braved the dangers of this route for the sake of gain, but it was not until 1832 that the first actual emigrant of whom there is any account turned his face toward the Pacific. The name of the man was Jason Lee, a Methodist minister, who in 1833 read an appeal for missionaries who would respond to the call of the Nez Perces Indians of Washington and Idaho to teach them the Bible. The appeal, which was addressed to anyone who would respond to the call from beyond the Rocky Mountains, read: [3]

We are for having a mission established at once. Let two suitable men, unencumbered with families and possessing the spirit of martyrs, throw themselves into the nation, live with them, learn their language, preach Christ to them, and—as the way opens,—introduce schools, agriculture, and the arts of civilized life. The means for these improvements can be introduced through the fur traders, and by the reënforcements with which from time to time we can strengthen the mission.

The call stirred the blood of Jason Lee, a young Canadian, six feet three inches tall, and he persuaded his nephew, Daniel Lee, to accompany him.[4]

Early in 1834 Lee and his nephew, with two other companions, rode on horseback to Independence. There they were to join the train of about two hundred hardy trappers and hunters, for it was necessary for travelers through the country beyond the Missouri to keep together, for common defense against the Indians.

Jason Lee soon became a great favorite with the hunters and trappers. They admired him because of his ability to endure hardships with the best of them, his readiness to do his share and more than his share of the work of camp and trail, and his manly, straightforward ways.

For weeks the party traveled through the buffalo country, where meat was to be had in abundance. Hunting parties were regularly sent out to bring in a supply of the animals. But soon game became scarce, and entire days were passed without eating meat. Even when meat could be secured, it was often impossible to cook it, lest prowling bands of Indians, seeing the smoke from the fire, should pounce upon the camp. At such times there was nothing to do but go supperless to bed, or eat raw meat. While some tried to rest, others stood guard, for only by constant vigilance could the party hope to reach their goal.

Finally the destination was reached, and the first mission among the Oregon Indians was opened on the Willamette.

Two years later another party of four missionaries set out from New York State to the Oregon Country,[5] Dr. Marcus Whitman and his bride, and Dr. H. H. Spalding and his bride. They had arranged to join a party of fur traders of the American Fur Company at Independence, but when they reached the Missouri river they were dismayed to learn that the traders had set out four days before their arrival.

Dr. Spalding said they must not think of going on alone; they must return home. But Dr. Whitman said, "We will go on." And brave Mrs. Spalding carried the day by her determined words, "I have started for Oregon, and to Oregon I will go, or leave my body on the plains."

So the missionaries hurried on their way, hoping to overtake the fur traders within a week or ten days. But it proved to be a month. During this time Mrs. Spalding and Mrs. Whitman were the life of the company, encouraging the men when obstacles hindered them, and spurring them on when Dr. Spalding was tempted to say, "Let's go back." He didn't say this very often—but when he was "kicked by a mule, shaken by the ague, stripped by a tornado, not only of his tents but his blankets, and crowded off the ferry-

boat by an awkward, uncivilized frontier cow," it is not strange that he was discouraged.

Dr. Whitman had provided a spring wagon for the two brides, but Mrs. Whitman preferred to ride on horseback at the side of her husband, leaving the wagon to Mrs. Spalding, who was not strong. On other horses rode the husbands and W. H. Gray, who was to be the business agent of the mission station. Following them came two teamsters, in charge of the wagons bearing the supplies.

The fur traders' caravan was overtaken on Loupe Fork. In the united party there were more than two hundred men to oppose hostile Indians. The attention of many of these men had to be given to the six hundred animals taken along for food. These animals tempted the Indians, and it was necessary each night to camp with the stock in the center, around this the tents and wagons, and about the whole encampment a company of vigilant sentinels.

The united caravan had nineteen laden carts, each drawn by two mules driven tandem, and one light wagon belonging to the American Fur Company, a rival of the Hudson Bay Company that opposed the emigration from the United States; two wagons belonging to Captain Stuart, whose train was a part of the caravan, and one light two-horse wagon and one four-horse freight wagon belonging to the missionaries.

The experienced plainsmen shook their heads when they learned that Dr. Whitman planned to take his wagons across the mountains; they explained that they would leave their own wagons at Fort Laramie. But Dr. Whitman insisted that the wagons must go all the way. He was not thinking merely of the convenience of those who would use them, but more of the great importance of proving to the world that a wagon could be taken to Oregon. He was looking forward to the day when there would be in that country more white people than Indians. Yet he knew that men and women would be prevented from making the journey by the statement that it was impossible for colonists to go

to Oregon by wagon. An English editor had said that American wagons could not go to the Columbia river, and Americans were believing him. It was Dr. Whitman's purpose to show the doubters that they were wrong.

For many weeks of their journey the travelers had an abundance of food. In the buffalo country, where a single herd sometimes covered a thousand acres, the hunters could slaughter the noble animals at will.

In anticipation of later days when game would be scarce, the caravan paused to "jerk" or dry the buffalo meat. The jerked meat did not seem very appetizing, so long as fresh, juicy buffalo steaks were to be had, but when the herds vanished, all were glad to eat it. Yet how they longed for a little bread to go with it! Once Mrs. Whitman wrote, "O for a few crusts of mother's bread; girls, don't waste the bread in the old home."

"That is the nearest to a complaint the brave woman came during all the trying journey, in spite of scorching sun, the clouds of alkali dust that stung the eyes and throat, the impure water they were compelled to use, the myriads of mosquitoes and buffalo gnats," one of the historians of the journey has said.

When, on July 4, 1836, the missionaries were at last over the crest of the Rockies, twenty-five hundred miles from home, they paused, spread their blankets, unfurled the American flag, and knelt in thankful prayer to dedicate to God the Oregon Country. The act meant more than the missionaries ever knew. One historian of Oregon [6] urges that it went far toward giving to the United States six thousand miles of Pacific coast.

After this notable Fourth of July celebration, the march was resumed. Word of the advance of the caravan was taken by Indian scouts to a party of trappers and Indians who were encamped on the banks of the Green river.

This exhilarating news immediately inspired . . . the trappers, foremost among whom was Meek, with a desire

to be the first to meet and greet the oncoming caravan and especially to salute the two white women who were bold enough to invade a mountain camp.[7] In a very short time Meek, with half a dozen comrades and ten or a dozen Nez Perces, were mounted and away on the self-imposed errand of welcome; the trappers because they were "spoiling" for a fresh excitement, and the Nez Perces because the missionaries were bringing them information concerning the powerful and beneficent Deity of the white men.

On the Sweetwater about two days' travel from camp the caravan of the advancing company was discovered, and the trappers proposed to give them a characteristic greeting. To prevent mistakes in recognizing them, a white flag was hoisted on one of their guns, and the word was given to start. Then over the brow of a hill they made their appearance, riding with that mad speed only an Indian or a trapper can ride, yelling, whooping, dashing forward with frantic and threatening gestures.

The uninitiated travelers, believing they were about to be attacked by Indians, prepared for defence, nor could they be persuaded that the preparations were unnecessary until their guide pointed out to them the white flag in advance. At the assurance that the flag betokened friends, every movement of the wild brigade became fascinating. On they came, riding faster and faster, yelling louder and louder, and gesticulating more and more madly, until, as they met and passed the caravan, they discharged their guns in one volley over the heads of the company, and suddenly wheeling rode back to the front as wildly as they had come. Nor could this first brief display content the crazy cavalcade. After reaching the front, they rode back and forth, and around and around the caravan, which had returned their salute, showing off their feats of horsemanship, and the knowing tricks of their horses together; hardly stopping to exchange questions and answers but seeming really intoxicated with delight at the meeting. What strange emotions filled the hearts of the missionaries, when they beheld the Indians among whom their lot was to be cast. . . .

But it was towards . . . Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding that the chief interest was directed; an interest that was

founded in the Indian mind upon wonder, admiration, and awe; and in the minds of the trappers upon the powerful reflections awakened by seeing in their midst two refined Christian women, with the complexion and dress of their own mothers and sisters. United to the startling effects of memory was respect for the religious devotion which had inspired them to undertake the long and dangerous journey to the Rocky Mountains, and also a sentiment of pity for what they knew only too well yet remained to be encountered by these delicate women.

That evening, when the party arrived in camp at the Nez Perces and Flathead village, on Green river, the frontiersmen looked reverently on the faces of the first white women they had seen in years. Years later one of them said: "From that day when I again took the hand of a civilized woman, I was a better man." And a trapper said, "This is something the royal Hudson Bay Company, and its masters can't drive out of Oregon." He knew that the coming of the two women meant the dawning of civilization.

The missionaries now prepared for their journey to the Columbia river.[8] According to the advice of the mountain men the heaviest wagon was left at the rendezvous, together with every heavy article that could be dispensed with. But Dr. Whitman refused to leave the light wagon, although assured that he would never be able to get it to the Columbia, nor even to the Snake river. The good Doctor had an immense fund of determination when there was an object to be gained or a principle involved. The only persons who did not oppose wagon transportation were the Indians. They sympathized with his determination and gave him their assistance. The evidence of a different and higher civilization than they had ever seen were held in high reverence by them. The wagon, the domestic cattle, especially the cows and calves, were always objects of great interest to them. Therefore they freely gave their assistance, and a sufficient number remained behind to help the Doctor, while the main party of both missionaries and In-

dians . . . proceeded to join the camp of two Hudson Bay traders a few miles on their way. . . .

By dint of great perseverance, Doctor Whitman continued to keep up with the camp day after day, though often coming in very late and very weary, until the party arrived at Fort Hall. At the Fort their baggage was again reduced as much as possible; and Doctor Whitman was compelled by the desertion of his teamster to take off two wheels of his wagon and transform it into a cart which could be more easily propelled in difficult places. With this he proceeded as far as the Boisé river where the Hudson Bay Company had a small fort or trading-post, but here again he was so strongly urged to relinquish the idea of taking his wagon to the Columbia that after much discussion he consented to leave it at Fort Boisé until some future time when unencumbered by goods or passengers he might return for it.

The work was done, substantially.[9] The wagon and the two brides, Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding, had won Oregon. The first wheels had marked the prairie, and brushed the sage, and grazed the rocks, and cut the river banks all the way from the Missouri to the Columbia. How many ten thousands have since been on that trail with their long line of white-topped canvas wagons! The first white woman had crossed the continent, and not only witnessed but achieved the victory . . . Oregon is already practically won. In going through, Whitman's wagon had demonstrated that women and children and household goods—the family—could be carried over the plains and mountains to Oregon.

At last Dr. and Mrs. Spalding reached Lapwai, where they paused and founded a mission. Before many weeks Dr. and Mrs. Whitman found a site for their new home on the banks of the Walla Walla, among the Cayuse. The mission was called Wai-i-lat-pu, the Indian name for the spot.

From that day Dr. Whitman had but two objects in life —to teach the Indians, and to win Oregon for the United

States. Both England and the United States claimed the territory by right of discovery, and in 1818 a treaty had been made for its joint occupation. Citizens of both countries looked with longing eyes on the rich lands, and longed to see their own flag raised over these. There were Englishmen who declared that the territory should belong to them, since they alone could colonize it.

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review*[10] said, during this period of uncertainty:

> However the political question between England and America as to the ownership of Oregon may be decided, *Oregon never can be colonized overland from the Eastern States* . . . In the meantime the long line of coast [of Oregon] invites emigration from the overpeopled shores of the old world. When once the Isthmus of Darien is rendered traversable the voyage will be easier and shorter than that to Australia, which 30,000 of our countrymen have made in a single year . . . *The uttermost portions of the earth are our inheritance;* let us not throw it away in mere supineness, or in deference to those wise sages of the discouraging school, who, had they been listened to, would have checked, once begun, all the enterprises which have checkered the face of the world in the last thirty years.

But Dr. Whitman was determined to show the English that they were wrong. Perhaps he did more than any other man to encourage emigration and to help the emigrants on their way.

Three years after the wagon had been left at Fort Boisé, Thomas J. Farnham,[11] who was on his way to Oregon, wrote in his diary, under date of September 15:

> Among the curiosities of this establishment were the fore wheels, axletree and thills of a one-horse wagon, said to have been run by the American missionaries from the State of Connecticut to the mountains thus far toward the mouth of the Columbia. It was left here under the belief that it could not be taken through the Blue Mountains. But fortunately for the next that shall attempt to cross the conti-

nent, a safe and easy passage has lately been discovered by which vehicles of this kind may be drawn through to Walla Walla.

Within two weeks Farnham had a taste of the mountain traveling of which Dr. Whitman had been warned when he was urged to leave his wagon at Fort Boisé. On October 1 he wrote: [12]

Awhile we led our animals through the tangled wood, and then along a steep gravelly side of the chasm, where the foothold slid at every step; then awhile among the rolling stones so thickly strewn upon the ground that the horses touched between them; and again awhile we seemed to hang on to the cliffs, and pause between advancing and following the laws of gravitation to the bed of the torrent that battled its way in the caverns far below; and then in the desperation of a last effort climbed the bank to a place of safety. At length we arrived at a large indentation in the face of the mountain, up the encircling rise of which the trail for half a mile was of comparatively easy ascent. At the end of this distance another difficulty was superadded to all we had yet experienced. The slope was covered to the depth of several feet with "cut rock"—dark shining cubes from one to three inches in diameter with sharp corners and edges. It was well nigh impossible to force our horses over them . . . The poor animals would slip, and gather, and cripple; and when unable longer to endure the cutting stone under their feet, would suddenly drop on their knees; but the pain caused by that position would soon force them to rise again, and struggle up the ascent. An half hour of such traveling passed us over the stony surface to the smooth grassy swells, the surface of which was earthy and pleasant to the lacerated feet of our horses.

Next day Farnham came to the camp of an Indian and his wife and children. In the evening he sat with the family.

The wife presented a dish of meat to her husband, and one to myself. There was a pause. The woman seated herself between her children. The Indian then bowed his head

and prayed to God! A wandering savage in Oregon calling upon Jehovah in the name of Jesus Christ! After the prayer, he gave meat to his children, and passed the dish to his wife.

While eating, the frequent repetition of the words Jehovah and Jesus Christ, in the most reverential manner led me to suppose they were conversing on religious topics, and thus they passed an hour. Meanwhile, the exceeding weariness of a long day's travel admonished me to seek rest.

I had slumbered, I know not how long, when a strain of music awoke me. I was about rising to ascertain whether the sweet notes of Tallis's Chant came to these solitudes from earth or sky, when a full recollection of my situation, and of the religious habits of my host, easily solved the rising inquiry, and induced me to observe instead of disturbing. The Indian family was engaged in its evening devotion. They were singing a hymn in the Nez Perces language. Having finished it, they all bowed their faces upon the buffalo robes, and Crickie prayed long and fervently. Afterwards they sang another hymn and retired. This was the first breathing of religious feeling that I had seen since leaving the States.

Next day the traveler was at Wai-i-lat-pu.

Another year passed before two of the wagons left by the wayside by Dr. Whitman were picked up. In 1840, Joseph Meek, the noted trapper, with a companion named Newell, decided to retire to a farm on the Willamette. Taking the two wagons left by Dr. Whitman at Fort Hall, they packed them with their goods and their families, and started for Walla Walla. Nicholas Craig and several other mountain men accompanied the party. Meek drove a team of four horses and one mule. Craig drove a team of four horses, and Newell, as the leader of the train, was mounted on a horse.

The journey was no easy one, extending as it did over immense plains of lava, round impassable canyons, over

rapid unbridged rivers, and over mountains hitherto believed to be passable only for pack trains.[13] The honor which has heretofore been accorded to the Presbyterian missionaries solely, of opening a wagon road from the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River, should in justice be divided with these two mountaineers, who accomplished the most difficult part of this difficult journey.

At Walla Walla the wagons were left, on account of the rainy season. The goods were transferred to pack-horses for the remainder of the journey. During the next year one of the wagons was taken the remainder of the way.

II. TRAVEL! TRAVEL! TRAVEL!

Upon the lofty bound I stand
That parts the East and West;
Before me—lies a fairy land;
Behind—a home of rest!
Here hope her wild enchantment flings,
Portrays all bright and lovely things,
My footsteps to allure—
But there in memory's light I see
All that was once most dear to me—
My young heart's cynosure!
—Mrs. Laura M. Thurston.

THE year before Meek's attempt to take the Whitman wagons to the Willamette, F. A. Wislizenus made the journey from the Missouri to the Columbia in company with a caravan of fur traders. The story of his trip was told in his diary.[14] In one of the most interesting chapters in the diary, Dr. Wislizenus wrote of the beginning of the journey and the organization of the caravan:

I went up the Missouri on the steamboat *St. Peters* to Chouteau's Landing. Our trip, which lasted six days, because the water was at a very low stage, offered nothing of special interest.

The border village, West Port, is six miles distant from Chouteau's Landing. There I intended to await the departure of this year's annual caravan. The village has perhaps thirty or forty houses, and is only a mile from the western border of the State of Missouri. It is the usual rendezvous for travelers to the Rocky Mountains, as is Independence, twelve miles distant for those journeying to Santa Fé.

I bought a horse and a mule, the former to ride, the latter

for my baggage; and made other preparations necessary for my journey.

On May 4th the different parties who were to join the expedition met for their first night camp at Sapling Grove, about eight miles from West Port. . . .

My first day's journey began under evil auspices, for I had not yet learned to pack my mule. The usual way of doing it is this: The baggage is divided into two equal parts, each part firmly bound up, and hung by loops on either side of the yoke-shaped pack saddle. The whole is further fastened by the so-called "lash-rope," of stout buffalo leather, which is first wound around the barrel of the animal, and then in diamond shaped turns as firmly as possible around the pack. My baggage weighed 150 to 200 pounds, a quite ordinary load for a mule; but I had not divided the burden properly, so that I had to repack repeatedly on the road. It was well toward evening when I reached the camp, where the others already had arrived.

Our caravan was small. It consisted of only twenty-seven persons. Nine of them were in the service of the Fur Company of St. Louis (Chouteau, Pratte and Company), and were to bring the merchandise to the yearly rendezvous on the Green river. Their leader was Mr. Harris, a mountaineer without special education but with five sound senses that he well knew how to use. All the rest joined the expedition as individuals. Among them were three missionaries, two of them accompanied by their wives, whom a Christian zeal for converting the heathen urged to the Columbia. Some others spoke of a permanent settlement on the Columbia; again, others intended to go to California, and so on. Almost all, however, were actuated by some commercial motive. The majority of the party were Americans; the rest consisted of French Canadians, a few Germans, and a Dane.

The Fur Company transported its goods on two-wheeled carts, of which there were four, each drawn by two mules, and loaded with 800 to 900 pounds. The rest put their packs on mules or horses, of which there were fifty to sixty in the caravan.

Our first camp, Sapling Grove, was in a little hickory

wood, with fresh spring water. Our animals we turned loose to graze in the vicinity. To prevent them from straying far, either the two fore feet, or the forefoot and hind-foot of one side are bound together with so-called "hobbles." In order that they may easily be caught, they drag a long rope of buffalo leather (trail rope). At night stakes (pickets) are driven into the earth at some distance from each other, and the animals are fastened to them by ropes.

After we had attended to our animals, and had eaten supper, we sprawled around a fire and whiled away the evening with chatting and smoking; then wrapped ourselves in our woolen blankets—the only bed one takes with one—and slept for the first time under our little tents, of which we had seven.

At dawn the leader rouses the camp with an inharmonious: "Get up! Get up! Get up!" Every one rises. The first care is for the animals. They are loosed from their pickets and allowed an hour for grazing. Meanwhile we prepare our breakfast, strike our tents, and prepare for the start. The animals are driven in again, packed and saddled.

We move off *in corpore*. We proceed at a moderate pace, in front the leader with his carts, behind him in line long drawn out the mingled riders and pack animals. In the early days of the journey we are apt to lead the pack animals by rope; later on we leave them free and drive them before us.

At first packing causes novices much trouble on the way. Here the towering pack leans to one side; there it topples under the animal's belly. At one time the beast stands stock still with its swaying load; at another it rushes madly off, kicking out till it is free of its burden. But pauseless, like an army over its fallen, the train moves on. With bottled-up wrath the older men, with raging and swearing the younger ones, gather up their belongings, load the beast afresh, and trot after the column.

Toward noon a rest of an hour or two is made, if a suitable camp can be found, the chief requisites being fresh water, good grass, and sufficient wood. We unload the beasts to let them graze, and prepare a mid-day meal. Then we start off again, and march on till toward sunset.

We set up the tents, prepare our meal, lie around the fire,

and then, wrapped in our woolen blankets, commit ourselves to our fate till the next morning. In this way twenty to twenty-five miles are covered daily.

The only food the animals get is grass. For ourselves, we take with us the first week some provisions, such as ham, ship-biscuit, tea and coffee. Afterwards, we depend on hunting.

Not until 1842 did as many as one hundred homeseekers win their way to the end of the Oregon Trail, but in 1843 the number approached one thousand. Peter H. Burnett [15] of Weston, Missouri, was one of that year's emigrants. Among his neighbors he organized a wagon company, and on May 8, 1843, he went to the rendezvous near Independence, with two ox wagons, a small two-horse wagon, four yoke of oxen, and two mules.

The start from Independence was made on May 22.

The weather being clear, and the road as good as possible, the day's journey was most delightful. The white-sheeted wagon and the five teams, moving in the wilderness of green prairie, made the most lovely appearance. The place was very beautiful; and no scene appeared to our enthusiastic vision more exquisite than the sight of so many wagons, tents, fires, cattle, and people, as were here collected. At night the sound of joyous music was heard in the tents. Our long journey thus began in sunshine and song, in anecdote and laughter, but these all vanished before we reached its termination.

Of the journey across the valley of the Platte, Mr. Burnett said:

One great difficulty in this part of the trip was the scarcity of fuel. Sometimes we found dry willows, sometimes we picked up pieces of driftwood along the way, which we put into our wagons, and hauled them until we needed them. At many points of the route up the Platte we had to use buffalo chips. By cutting a trench some ten inches deep, six inches wide, and two feet long, we were

enabled to get along with very little fuel. At one or two places the wind was so severe that we were forced to use the trenches in order to make a fire at all.

On the 27th of June our people had halted for lunch at noon, and to rest the teams and allow the oxen to graze. Our wagons were about three hundred yards from the river, and were strung out in line to the distance of one mile. While taking our lunch we saw seven buffalo bulls on the opposite side of the river, coming toward us, as if they intended to cross the river in the face of our whole caravan. When they arrived on the opposite bank they had a full view of us; and yet they deliberately entered the river, wading a part of the distance, and swimming the remainder. When we saw that they were determined to cross at all hazards, our men took their rifles, formed in line between the wagons and the river, and awaited the approach of the animals. So soon as they rose the bank, they came in a rush, broke boldly through the line of the men, and bore to the left of the wagons. Three of them were killed, and most of the others wounded.

On July 1, the party was about to cross the South Fork of the Platte.

We made three boats by covering our wagon boxes or beds with green buffalo hides sewed together, stretched tightly over the boxes, flesh side out, and tacked on with large tacks, and the boxes, thus covered, were turned up to the sun until the hides were thoroughly dry. The process of drying green hides had to be repeated several times.

As far as Fort Hall the trail was good. We had yet to accomplish the untried and most difficult portion of our long and exhaustive journey. We could not anticipate at what moment we might be compelled to abandon our wagons in the mountains, pack our scant supplies on our four oxen, and make our way on foot through the terribly rough country as best we could. We fully comprehended the situation, but we never faltered in our inflexible determination to accomplish the trip, if within the limits of possibility, with the resources at our command. Dr. Whitman assured us that

we could succeed, and encouraged and aided us with every means in his power.

The trip to Fort Walla Walla, 1691 miles, required 147 days. The average trip per day was thus less than twelve miles. The emigrants paused at Dr. Whitman's mission to rest and lay in a fresh supply of provisions. There were those who cried out that the missionary was exploiting them, that he had urged them to go that way for his own profit. Was he not selling wheat at a dollar a bushel and potatoes at forty cents? In Missouri they had sold wheat for sixty cents a bushel and potatoes for twenty-five cents. There were those who refused to listen to the explanation made to them that conditions were quite different, and they refused to buy. Later, it became necessary for the wise purchasers to divide with those who had failed to supply their needs because of their suspicions of Dr. Whitman.

But many emigrants understood better the spirit of the missionary of Wai-i-lat-pu. On his return from his trip of 1842 to Washington, where he outlined a plan for a territorial government for the country of his adoption, he inspired a large company to go with him to the West. Of his activities on this trip one who knew him said:

He was the ministering angel to the sick, helping the weary, encouraging the wavering, cheering the tired mothers, setting broken bones, and mending wagons. He was in the front, in the center, and in the rear. He was in the river, hunting out fords, through the quicksands, in the desert place looking for water and grass, among the mountains hunting for passes never before trodden by white men. At noontide and at midnight he was on the alert as if the whole line was his own family, and as if all the flocks and herds were his own. For all this he never asked nor expected a dollar from any source, and especially did he feel repaid at the end, when, standing at his mission home, hundreds of his fellow pilgrims took him by the hand and thanked him with tears in their eyes for all he had done.

At Fort Hall, Captain Grant, the servant of the Hudson Bay Company, tried to discourage the emigrants from taking their wagons and farm tools with them. He pointed to a yard full of wagons and tools which other settlers had left behind. The emigrants were ready to do as he asked, until Whitman promised to help them through the mountains, wagons and all.

How he succeeded in the task he set himself may be judged from a single incident of the way, after Fort Hall had been left behind:

When the emigrants reached the Snake River, Dr. Whitman proceeded to fasten wagons together in one long string, the strongest in the lead. As soon as the teams were in position, he tied a rope around his waist, and, starting his horse into the current, swam over. He called to others to follow him, and, when they had force enough to pull at the rope, the lead team was started in, and all were drawn over in safety; as soon as the leading teams were able to get foothold on the bottom, all were safe, as they, guided by the strong arms of the men pulling at the rope, pulled the weaker ones along.

One of the members of this company of 1843 was Jesse Applegate. In his journal of the trip [16] he gave a pleasing picture of the afternoon and evening of a long day:

It is now one o'clock; the bugle has sounded, and the caravan has resumed its westward journey. It is in the same order but the evening is far less animated than the morning march; a drowsiness has fallen apparently on man and beast; teamsters drop asleep on their perches and even when walking by the teams, and the words of command are now addressed to the slowly creeping oxen in the soft tones of women or the piping treble of children, while the snores of the teamsters make a droning accompaniment. But a little incident broke the monotony of the march. An emigrant's wife, whose state of health has caused Doctor Whitman to travel near the wagon for the day, is now taken with violent illness. The Doctor has had the wagon driven out

From Gregg's "Commerce of the Prairies"

CARAVAN ON THE MARCH

From Bartlett's "Texas, New Mexico and California"

WAGON TRAIN STAMPEDED BY WILD HORSES

of the line, a tent pitched and a fire kindled. Many conjectures are being made in regard to the mysterious proceeding . . . The sun is now getting low in the west, and at length the painstaking pilot is standing ready to conduct the teams in the circle which he has previously measured and marked out, which is to form the invisible fortification for the night. The leading wagons follow him so evenly around the arch that but a wagon's length separates them. Each wagon follows in the track, until its tongue and ox-chain will perfectly reach from one to the other, and so accurate the measure and perfect the practice, that the hindmost wagon of the train always precisely closes the gateway, as each wagon is brought into position. It is dropped from its team (the team being inside the circle), the team unyoked and the yokes and chains are used to connect the wagon strongly with that in front. Within ten minutes from the time the leading wagon halted, the barricade is formed, the teams unyoked and driven out to pasture. Every one is busy preparing fires of buffalo chips to cook the evening meal, pitching tents and otherwise preparing for the night. There are anxious watchers for the absent wagon, for there are many matrons who may be afflicted like its inmate before the journey is over . . . But as the sun goes down the absent wagon rolls into camp, the bright, speaking face and cheery look of the doctor, who rides in advance, declares without words that all is well, and both mother and child are comfortable.

I would fain now and here pay a passing tribute to that noble and devoted man, Doctor Whitman . . . His great experience and indomitable energy were of priceless value to the migrating column. His constant advice, which we knew was based upon a knowledge of the road before us, was "Travel, *travel,* TRAVEL," nothing else will take you to the end of your journey; nothing is wise that does not help you along; nothing is good for you that causes a moment's delay. His great authority as a physician saved us many prolonged and perhaps ruinous delays, and it is no disparagement to others to say that to no other individual are the emigrants of 1843 so much indebted for the successful conclusion of their journey as to Doctor Marcus Whitman.

Another pleasing picture of an evening on the road was given in the diary of one who later became a member of the Oregon Territorial Legislature, who had left Independence with a party May 17, 1843.[17] On July 30 the caravan came in sight of the Rockies.

This event was worthy of the commemoration of an encampment, and we accordingly wound up the line two hours earlier than usual. The hunters of our party had been fortunate this day in obtaining some fine antelope and two fat young buffaloes, and we set out for a regular feast. When the meal was over, and when the prospective perils which lay in the entrails of those grim giants had been canvassed again and again, we broke from all grave considerations to consecrate the evening to merriment. The night was beautiful, scarcely a breath stirred the air, and the bright stars in the blue vault above looked brighter than ever. The camp fires streaming upwards from the prairie plains flooded the tents with their mellow light, and made the tops of the quadrangular barricade of wagons look like a fortification of molten gold. Jim Wayne's fiddle was at once in request, and set after set went in upon the sward to foot a measure to its notes. McFarley and the representatives of Big Pigeon forgot in the moment all the bickerings of their ambitions, and formed two of a party (amongst whom was my old friend, Green, the Missourian,) who listened to the Indian traditions of Captain Gant, and then told their own wonderful stories in return. The revelry was kept up till a late hour, and the result was that the whole party went to bed worn out with pleasure and fatigue.

During the next year, 1844, William M. Case of Indiana joined the Oregon cavalcade. His hunger for Oregon dated back to the day when William Henry Harrison, then United States Senator, gave him a copy of the Journal of the Lewis and Clark expedition to the Columbia. Over this he used to pore until he knew it almost word for word. When he grew older and announced his purpose to go to the

Pacific coast, his father's only counsel was, "Take a wife with you." [18]

He joined a train of sixty wagons which crossed the Missouri at the site of Omaha, Nebraska. There were two divisions in the company, and these moved in parallel lines, about a quarter of a mile to half a mile apart, that the wagons might all be within easy supporting distance of each other in case of attack. At night all the wagons came together, and formed a corral, the tents being pitched inside of this. John Marshall, who discovered gold in California four years later, was a member of the caravan.

In the Platte Valley, a herd of buffaloes was seen coming toward the train. The first warning was the sound of what many thought was distant thunder. The front of the line was perhaps half a mile long, and moved onward like a tornado. Their one chance of safety seemed to be to drive ahead as rapidly as possible in the hope of getting out of range. So the oxen were urged to run.

The flying herds of the buffalo passed but a few yards to the rear of the last wagons; they were going at such a rate that to be struck by them would have been like the shock of rolling bowlders of a ton's weight.

Near Fort Platte word was received from the commander that they should remain where they were. There was a company of Sioux Indians at the Fort, and he feared they were meditating mischief. "If you have any one with you who can understand Sioux, send him on," the message concluded.

So a Frenchman who understood the language was sent to the fort. He rode fearlessly among the Sioux, of whom there were about three thousand. Once he heard an Indian say how he wanted a white man's horse. To him the chief replied, "Wait a few days, until the emigrants come up, and we shall have all their horses."

Craftily the Frenchman saw to it that a report was circulated among the Indians of the death from smallpox of one of the approaching emigrants. The alarmed savages

lost no time in fleeing from the fort, and were not seen there again that summer.

After the Sioux country had been left behind it was discovered that at least one hundred of the one hundred and twenty men in the company were worthless idlers. The work was left to the twenty dependable men. The others played cards, danced and fiddled all the evening, and slept late next day, until the women called them. Finally the twenty men who had to rise at two o'clock each morning to hunt the cattle which, in grazing, had wandered far away, decided they could do this no longer for the one hundred idlers. One morning they left the others behind, sleeping, and continued their journey. Before night the train was in two sections, the workers and the fiddlers.

III. WITH FRANCIS PARKMAN ON THE TRAIL

They knew no dread of danger
  When rose the Indian's yell,
Right gallantly they struggled,
  Right gallantly they fell:
From Alleghany's summit
  To the farthest western shore
These brave men's forms are lying
  Where they perished in their gore;
And not a single monument
  Is seen in all the land,
In honor of the memory
  Of that heroic band.

—Charles A. Jones.

No picture of the Oregon Trail is complete without a reference to Francis Parkman's masterly description of the first stages of the journey:[19]

Last spring, 1846, was a busy season in the city of St. Louis. Not only were emigrants from every part of the country preparing for the journey to Oregon and California, but an unusual number of traders were making ready their wagons and outfits for Santa Fé. The hotels were crowded, and the gunsmiths and saddlers were kept constantly at work in providing arms and equipment for the different parties of travellers. Almost every day steamboats were leaving the levee and passing up the Missouri, crowded with passengers on the way to the frontier.

In one of these, the *Radnor,* . . . my friend and relative, Quincy A. Shaw, and myself left St. Louis on the twenty-fifth of April on a tour of curiosity and amusement to the Rocky Mountains. The boat was loaded until the water broke alternately over her guards. Her upper deck was covered with large wagons of a peculiar form, for the Santa Fé trade, and the hold was crammed with goods for

the same destination. There were also the equipments and provisions of a party of Oregon emigrants, a band of mules and horses, piles of saddles, and a multitude of nondescript articles, indispensable on the prairies.

. . . In five or six days we began to see signs of the great western movement that was taking place. Parties of emigrants, with their tents and wagons, were encamped on open spots near the bank, on their way to the common rendezvous at Independence.

The scene at Independence he described thus:

On the muddy shore stood some thirty or forty dark, slawish looking Spaniards, gazing stupidly out from beneath their broad hats. They were attached to one of the Santa Fé companies, whose wagons were crowded together on the banks above. In the midst of these, crouching over a smouldering fire, was a group of Indians, belonging to a remote Mexican tribe. One or two French hunters from the mountains, with their long hair and buckskin dresses, were looking at the boat, and seated on a log close at hand were three men, with rifles lying across their knees. The foremost of these, a tall, strong figure, with a clear, blue eye and an open, intelligent face, might very well represent that race of restless and intrepid pioneers whose axes and rifles have opened a path from the Alleghanies to the western prairies. He was on his way to Oregon, probably a more congenial field to him than any that now remained on this side the great plains.

Mr. Parkman went on to Kansas City. There he wrote:

The emigrants . . . were encamped on the prairies about eight or ten miles distant, to the number of a thousand or more, and new parties were constantly passing out from Independence to join them. They were in great companies, holding meetings, passing resolutions, and drawing up regulations, but unable to unite in the choice of leaders to conduct them across the prairie.

Being at leisure one day, I rode over to Independence. The town was crowded. A multitude of shops had sprung

up to furnish the emigrants and Santa Fé traders with necessaries for the journey; and there was an incessant hammering and banging from a dozen blacksmith sheds, where the heavy wagons were being repaired, and the horses and oxen shod. The streets were thronged with men, horses, and mules. While I was in the store, a train of emigrant wagons from Illinois passed through to join the camp on the prairies, and stopped on the principal street. A multitude of healthy children's faces were peeping out from under the covers of the wagons. Here and there a buxom damsel was seated on horseback, holding over her sunburnt face an old umbrella or a parasol, once gaudy enough but now miserably faded. The men, very sober-looking countrymen, stood about their oxen.

Some time after the beginning of the journey of the party, which was made up in part of Parkman and his associate, as well as a British captain and his brother and guide, the captain insisted that the plans of the caravan must be reorganized. "Our whole system is wrong," he said. "Why, the way we travel, strung out over the prairie for a mile, an enemy might attack the foremost riders and cut them off before the others could come up. . . . Then we might be attacked in camp. We've no sentinels, we camp in disorder; no precaution at all to guard against surprise. . . . We ought to camp in a hollow square, with the fire in the center, and have sentinels, and a regular password appointed for every night. Beside, there should be videttes riding in advance, to find a place for the camp and give warning of an enemy."

Perhaps it was because of the distracting insistence of the captain on these precautions, needless on the first stages of the journey, that the caravan managed to get out of the direct track and had to strike the St. Joseph Trail, and follow this till it intersected the Oregon Trail. For eight days they did not see a human being, then one night as they sat around the camp-fire they were gratified by hearing the faint voices of men and women.

About dark a sallow-faced fellow . . . rode up to the tents . . . another followed, a stout, square-built, intelligent-looking man, who announced himself as leader of an emigrant party, encamped one mile in advance of us. About twenty wagons, he said, were with him; the rest of his party were on the other side of the Big Blue, quarreling among themselves.

These were the first emigrants that we had overtaken, although we had found abundant and melancholy traces of their progress throughout the whole course of the journey. Sometimes we passed the grave of one who had sickened and died on the way. The earth was usually torn up, and covered thickly with wolf-tracks. Some had escaped this violation. One morning, a piece of plank, standing upright on the summit of a grassy hill, attracted our notice, and riding up to it, we found the following words very rightly traced upon it, apparently with a red-hot piece of iron:

MARY ELLEN
Died May 7, 1845
Aged two months.

We were late in breaking up our camp on the following morning, and scarcely had we ridden a mile when we saw, far in advance of us, drawn against the horizon, a line of objects stretching at regular intervals along the level edge of the prairie. An intervening swell soon hid them from sight, until, ascending it a quarter of an hour after, we saw close before us the emigrant caravan, with its heavy white wagons coming on in their slow procession, and a large drove of cattle following behind. Half a dozen yellow-visaged Missourians, mounted on horseback, were cursing and shouting among them, their lank, angular proportions enveloped in brown homespun, evidently cut and adjusted by the hands of a domestic female tailor. As we approached, they called out to us: "How are ye, boys? Are you for Oregon or California?"

As we pushed rapidly past the wagons, children's faces were thrust out from the white coverings to look at us; while the care-worn, thin-featured matron, or the buxom

girl, seated in front, suspended the knitting on which most of them were engaged to stare at us with wondering curiosity. By the side of each wagon stalked the proprietor, urging on his patient oxen, who shouldered heavily along, inch by inch, on their interminable journey.

That night the dissension that had been smouldering in the emigrant caravan broke out, and a portion of the company left and asked to join Parkman's party. They were told that the slow oxen would find it difficult to keep pace with Parkman's mules, but the leader of the disaffected emigrants replied that his oxen should keep up; and if they couldn't, why, he allowed, he'd find out how to make 'em.

Yet almost at once the men with the oxen went ahead. The axle-tree of the wagon of Parkman's English companions broke and let down the vehicle in the bed of a brook. During the day required to repair damages, the oxen managed to get so far ahead that it was a week before all the party were together once more.

Not long after the emigrants had been overtaken, the men encamped on the banks of the Platte. There Parkman wrote:

Among the emigrants was an overgrown boy, some eighteen years old, with a head as round and about as large as a pumpkin, and fever-and-ague fits had dyed his face to a corresponding color. He wore an old white hat, tied under his chin with a handkerchief; his body was short and stout, but his legs of disproportioned and appalling length. I observed him at sunset, breasting the hill with gigantic strides, and standing against the sky on the summit like a colossal pair of tongs. In a moment after we heard him screaming frantically behind the ridge, and, nothing doubting that he was in the clutches of Indians or grizzly bears, some of the party caught up their rifles and ran to the rescue. His outcries, however, proved but an ebullition of joyous excitement; he had chased two little wolf-pups to their burrow, and was on his knees, grubbing away like a dog at the mouth of the hole to get at them.

During the night this boy was the cause of even greater anxiety:

It was his turn to hold the middle-guard, but no sooner was he called up than he coolly arranged a pair of saddle-bags under a wagon, laid his head upon them, closed his eyes, opened his mouth and fell asleep. The guard on our side of the camp, thinking it no part of his duty to look after the cattle of the emigrants, contented himself with watching over our horses and mules; the wolves, he said, were unusually noisy; but still no mischief was forboded, but when the sun rose not a hoof or a horn was in sight. The cattle were gone. While Tom was quietly sleeping, the wolves had driven them away.

When the South Fork of the Platte was reached the emigrants crossed the river in advance. First the heavy ox-wagons plunged down the bank and dragged slowly over the sand-beds; sometimes the hoofs of the oxen were scarcely wet by the thin sheet of water; and the next moment the river would be boiling against their sides, and eddying around the wheels. Inch by inch they receded from the shore, dwindling every moment, until at length they seemed to be floating far out in the middle of the river. A more critical experiment awaited us; for our little mule-cart was ill-fitted for the passage of so swift a stream. We watched it with anxiety, till it seemed a motionless white speck in the midst of the waters; and it *was* motionless, for it had stuck fast in a quicksand. The little mules were losing their footing, the wheels were sinking deeper and deeper and the water began to rise through the bottom and drench the goods within. All of us who had remained in the hither bank galloped to the rescue; the men jumped into the water, until by much effort the cart was extricated, and conveyed in safety across. . . .

One more paragraph by Parkman should be quoted:

It is worth noting that on the Platte one may sometimes see the shattered wrecks of ancient claw-footed tables, well waxed and rubbed, or a massive bureau of carved oak. These, some of them no doubt the relics of ancestral pros-

perity in the colonial time, must have encountered strange vicissitudes. Imported, perhaps, originally from England, then, with the declining fortunes of their owners, borne across the Alleghanies to the wilderness of Ohio or Kentucky; then to Illinois or Missouri, and now at last fondly stowed away in the family wagon for the interminable journey to Oregon. But the stern privations of the way are little anticipated. The cherished relic is soon flung out to scorch and crack upon the hot prairie.

IV. LEARNING BY BITTER EXPERIENCE

Strike the tent! the sun has risen; not a vapor streaks the dawn,
And the frosted prairie brightens to the westward, far and near:
Prime afresh the trusty rifle, sharpen well the hunting spear—
For the frozen sod is trembling, and the noise of hoofs I hear!

. . . . .

Myriad hoofs will scar the prairie, in our wild, resistless race,
And a sound, like mighty waters, thunders down the desert's face:
Yet the rein may not be tightened, nor the rider's eye look back—
Death to him whose speed should slacken, on the maddened bison's track.

—Bayard Taylor.

One of the emigrant parties of 1847 was far better equipped than the average, and the journey was free from the privations that made the Oregon Trail one long nightmare to so many people. Hugh Cosgrove was a member of the company of thirteen families, which started from Illinois in April.[20] The equipment consisted of three well-built wagons, drawn by three yokes of oxen, and a herd of fifteen cows.

When he was ninety years old Mr. Cosgrove spoke of the journey as one long picnic:

The animals of the prairie, the Indians, the traders and trappers of the mountain country, the progress of the season, which was exceptionally mild, just about sufficed to keep up the interest . . . Almost all migration has been carried on in circumstances of danger and distress, but this was, although daring in the extreme, a summer jaunt.

After making the drive across Iowa and Missouri in the springtime the Missouri river was crossed, a week being spent at St. Joseph, waiting for the horses. The company

was organized, of course. There was no lack of materials, as, besides this party of thirteen families, there were hundreds of others gathering at St. Joseph, the emigration of that year amounting to almost two thousand persons. A train of one hundred and fourteen wagons was soon made up.

Almost immediately after starting trappers met them and urged them to break up in parties of not over fifteen wagons each; unless this was done, they said, they would never get through.

It was not long before the emigrants realized that the advice was good. Two days later the first accident taught them that "a trifling break down or accident to one hinders all, and the progress of the whole body was determined by the slowest ox."

When Mr. Cosgrove separated his three fine wagons and his active young oxen and horses out on the prairie, the captain of the company said, "That settles it; if Cosgrove won't stay by me, there is no use trying to keep the company together."

Fuel was scarce on the plains, and it came to be the regular thing to gather buffalo chips, morning and evening as camp was made, each one in the party taking his sack and gathering enough for a fire. One day, as the train crested a slope, Mr. Cosgrove, seeing what seemed like brown, shaggy tufts thickly studding the distance as far as the eye could reach, exclaimed, "We shall have plenty of firewood now! No need of gathering chips to-night!" He thought he saw brushwood. A girl cried out that they were moving. Sure enough—what had been taken for firewood proved to be a herd of buffaloes.

It was not altogether safe to be in the path of such an immense herd, and the line was quickly halted, the wagon pins drawn and a band of hunters quickly went out on horseback to meet the host, and also get buffalo meat. The herd divided, leaving the teams clear and the oxen standing their ground. One part went off to the hills; the other took

the fords of the Platte, making the water boil as they dashed through. The herd was so vast that at least five hours elapsed before the last flying column had galloped by . . . What a picture—thirteen families with their oxen and wagons, sitting quietly in the midday blaze, while a buffalo herd, perhaps one hundred thousand strong, or even more, dashed past on either side.

The buffalo furnished meat until the salmon streams were reached. There was always plenty of food.

On the Umatilla, after crossing the Blue Mountains, the emigrants were visited by Doctor Whitman and his wife and Dr. and Mrs. Spalding. A cow was traded to Dr. Whitman for a horse. This was only a few months before Dr. Whitman and all at the Wai-i-lat-pu station were killed by the Indians.

At the Columbia river bateaux were waiting, these having been sent from Vancouver by those who had heard of the coming of the party. The voyage down the stream was quite comfortable. The wagons were taken to pieces and loaded on the boats, and the oxen were driven by the old trail along the Columbia.

James McKay, one of the company, not being able to hire a boat, built a raft. Others went over the mountains.

A trip of an entirely different kind was that made in 1850 by Henry J. Coke and his companions, visitors from England who planned to hunt big game on the Oregon Trail.[21] After a season in the East, the party reached St. Louis. There the journal was begun:

May 28, 1850. I began to think we never should get away from St. Louis. Fresh obstacles to our departure seemed to rise every day. The emigrants are the cause of this. Horses, mules, grass, game, are daily becoming scarce through them. For one of my horses I have paid $125, and for a mule $140. Three years ago I could have bought the two for less than half of what I have given for either. Men and guides are equally difficult to procure. . .

Pope says:

> Man wants but little here below,
> Nor wants that little long.

I am inclined to think that had Mr. Pope ever made preparations for a trip across the Rocky Mountains, he would have made the proviso that this journey was by no means to be included in his conception of the ordinary seven-stage journey of life.

. . . We have nine mules, eight horses, and two waggons. The party consists of my friend Fred, . . . a British parson and . . . myself, four young Frenchmen of St. Louis, Fils, a Canadian voyageur and Fred's valet-de-champs. The servants were changed from time to time during the trip.

The Englishman looked dubiously on the one thousand pounds of baggage. "We have in all a little less than 4000 pounds," he said, "and judging from the size of the waggons, I should think they are licensed to carry only three at the most."

The outfitting expenses proved to be about $1000 each. It was hoped that this amount would carry them through. This proved to be a mistake. "The want of management, the purchase of useless luxuries, and the fact of money being comparatively no great object, combined to make our expense more than double the usual outlay of emigrants," the leader wrote.

The wagons were loaded at St. Joseph, after a journey from St. Louis by steamer. The inexperience of these travelers was evident when the guide secured at St. Joseph on looking over the equipment after the start, announced that he would need to return to town for rope, picket-pins, harness, straps, and many other things that had not been provided.

When the journey was well begun, entries like these were made in the author's journal:

Roads hilly and very bad. Mules obstinate. The large waggon turns out to be twice the weight it ought to be, and

gets fixed in consequence at the first steep hill. Begin to lighten load. Send one hundred and fifty pounds of flour to Savannah, and sell one hundred pounds lead and one hundred pounds sugar to a farmer we met on the road. Must eat literally a load of salt pork before the wagons are light enough to travel fast.

Roads worse than ever. Heavy waggon as usual stuck in a rut, and is nearly upset. Discharge cargo, and find it hard work to carry the heavy boxes up the hill.

Hind wheel of small wagon breaks to pieces . . . An old Yorkshireman, with his flocks and herd and family . . . who . . . was now on his way out for the second time . . . in five minutes made a wheel far stronger than either of the remaining three.

While crossing a shaky bridge, two wheels of the large waggon were broken. Settlers near by who saw the accident lent a large cart to carry the things to the next place where wood could be secured.

One wheel a day is but a moderate average of breakages. . . . The mules we have packed with the load of the small wagon; all ran away through the thicket after the horses, and with the help of the trees, managed to throw the packs off and tear them to pieces. Have the greatest difficulty to catch the animals, and unpack them, and by the time we have done so, the teams are too tired to go on. An ox-wagon passes, and we borrow the oxen to pull us up a bad hill.

At the mouth of the Platte the men passed about two hundred wagons of emigrants. Here they left behind the salt pork. It was decided that it had been foolish to bring so much chocolate and ginger beer along.

When near Council Bluffs the leader wrote:

Hitherto our troubles have been somewhat numerous; we have broken down or met with some disaster every day. Nearly all of our men have turned out to be perfectly useless. The roads have been almost impassable, owing to the heavy rains; and we have more than once taken the longest and worst by mistake; but the most serious grievance is

that our mules are beginning to be galled. Many people have turned back before they got thus far. I am sure we find it sufficiently uninteresting and disagreeable to make us follow their example; yet, nevertheless, we are determined if possible to go through, and are fully prepared to give up the wagon and all other luxuries rather than relinquish the trip.

The next step in lightening the load was to sell the wagon to an Indian agent, as well as forty pounds of powder, one hundred pounds of lead, quantities of odds and ends, and all the ginger beer.

At the Elk-Horn river a raft was built of logs, collected with difficulty, lashed together with lariats. Three hundred pounds' weight could be ferried over on this raft. To take the animals across it was necessary for the men to swim the river eight or nine times, taking one horse at a time, or driving two or three of flogging and shouting behind them.

Near Fort Laramie the men were told that a few weeks before an emigrant had passed on his way to California, with no conveyance but his legs, and no baggage but what he wheeled in a barrow; that he overtook all who traveled with horses or oxen, and that as long as his health lasted he could walk twenty-five miles a day.

There were so many differences of opinion in the party that Fred and Mr. Coke agreed to separate.

Our principle of traveling differed in such a variety of ways; one thought it necessary to start early and stop in the middle of the day; the other thought it better to start later, and make no halt till dark. One thought it best to picket the horses at night; the other was for letting them run loose. One insisted upon keeping a watch; the other thought it would increase our fatigue without adding to our safety.

Two parties were made up, each led by one of the Englishmen; the horses and provisions were divided. The parson

and Mr. Coke went together, taking four mules for packing and one each to ride.

Fred and his party went on, determined to make thirty or thirty-five miles a day, while Mr. Coke planned to make no more than twenty-five.

The difficulties proved to be greater than ever, and Mr. Coke wished he had traveled alone, with two animals to ride and one pack mule.

Next day a Mormon train overtook the party. One old man said, "You chaps don't seem in no hurry anyhow." "We had passed each other on the road half a dozen times," Mr. Coke wrote. "I suppose no mule train but ours had ever been seen more than once by any party of Mormons before."

Passed nine men on the way from California to the East. I put some questions to them, but received very curt answers. They were a rough-looking set, and were as rude in manner as in appearance. All I could learn was that they had five mules laden with gold, packed in small square leather cases, and that the renowned Kit Carson was acting as guide to the party.

After crossing the Continental divide, provisions became scarce, forage for the animals was almost entirely lacking, and one by one they began to die. It was hoped to reach Fort Hall, though it was feared that it might be necessary to make the last bit of the way on foot. Mr. Coke wrote:

Decided to throw away every superfluous article, and so lighten the packs. Left the ground strewn with warnings for future emigrants. At least half of baggage left behind.

August 24. . . . As soon as the sun began to be warm we halted our animals. Poor beasts! They hunted far and wide, but found not a blade of grass, not a drop of water. After we had eaten our raw ham the wind died away, and the heat became insufferable. The rays from the burning sand were hardly less fierce than those which came direct from the sun. My pain was increased tenfold by the want of water. I crawled to the top of a hill and covered

my head with a blanket; this protected me from being scorched, but nearly suffocated me for want of air. Never in the deserts of the east, nor within the tropics in the west, have I suffered from heat as I did this day.

At last Green river was reached, "and men, mules and horses rushed on at full gallop nor stopped till they were knee-deep in the middle of the welcome stream."

The lateness of the season led the men to decide to give up California and go on to Oregon. So they turned to the right soon after entering the valley of Bear river.

On September 3 passed camp fires still alight. Since the emigrants had left them this morning, three bears, a mother and her two cubs, had followed them on the road for more than a mile. I should think the track of the big bear's hind foot was at least ten or twelve inches long. . . . In the middle of the day we overtook the emigrant train, consisting of six waggons.

At Fort Hall provisions were sought, but there were none to spare. On September 10 Mr. Coke wrote:

We came up with the emigrant train we had met the other side of Fort Hall . . . We stopped and supped with them, upon buttermilk and bread. They complained bitterly of the hardships of their life, lamenting their folly in leaving comfortable farms in the States for the uncertainty of finding better in Oregon. They seemed to think their troubles would now come to an end. They had already been more than four months on the march, and they had yet a long way to go. Their oxen were suffering from the stony roads, and the men were tired of their labor. We encouraged them as much as we could, and, by comparing our case with theirs, proved to them that there were others in worse predicaments than they. We told them that, however slow they travelled, they had their homes and families continually with them. They were all more or less used to some hardships, and driving oxen in a waggon was no harder work than driving the same oxen in a plough. They

had plenty of provisions; their wives baked them good bread, for they carried stoves with them; they were always protected from the weather, for if the ground was too wet they could sleep perfectly well in their covered waggon; whereas the labor of packing mules three or four times a day, the impossibility of sending, as they did, one of the party in advance to choose a camping ground, and the consequent uncertainty of sustaining the animals; our weakness, if attacked by Indians; the fatal results that would ensue upon the sickness of any one of so small a party, the want of provisions, and the constant exposure from being entirely without tents, were events which, when combined, were what few emigrants had ever undergone.

On September 17 a fatal attempt was made to ford Snake river. Mr. Coke was saved with difficulty. The servant was drowned. He was a farmer from Ohio, and was going on a prospecting trip in the hope of finding a home for his wife and five children.

October 3. Yesterday I met with a disaster which distresses me exceedingly. I broke my pipe, and am neither able to repair nor to replace it. Julius has one, the fumes of which we are compelled to share. If this should go (and it is already in four pieces, and bound up like a mummy) I tremble to think of the consequences.

October 4. I could not sleep for the cold, and yet I dreaded the approach of daylight, and the tugging at the frozen rope which it entailed. But there was no help for it. I might lie in bed till the sun was up, but must, in consequence, be another night in the mountains; and the animals, who suffer more than we do, could not stand this. So we tied them close to the still burning log, and, little by little, with the help of a warm every minute, we got the packs on. Poor beasts! they actually cringed when the saddle touched the great raws on their backs; the frost had made them so painful. What would I have given for a mouthful of hot tea or coffee before starting? But these are luxuries we must not think of. It seems as if this sort of life were to last forever.

Oct. 5. Passed an emigrant train of twelve waggons and about one hundred and fifty head of cattle. The poor people looked half starved. They had been restricted to a fourth of their proper ration for more than three weeks, and could not make what remained last over eight or ten days.

If Mr. Coke should arrive at The Dalles, one hundred and forty miles distant, before them, he promised to send provisions to them.

On October 8 the horse died, and Mr. Coke set out to walk the remaining hundred miles. Soon he was cheered by sight of the Columbia. "Shall I ever forget that day's walk?" he wrote. "The sand was more than a foot deep. For every two steps forward, it seemed as if you slipped one step back. The sun was hot; I had heavy boots on, reaching above my knees. . . . Above all, I was weak from exhaustion, having hardly tasted food since yesterday morning."

On October 10 he found encamped on the banks of the Columbia six wagons full of emigrants who counted on getting to The Dalles next day. They were disappointed when told it was still a good five days' journey for wagons.

At last The Dalles were reached. There Mr. Coke rejoined Fred, who had separated from him soon after the beginning of the journey. The remainder of the trip was made on the Columbia.

That danger and difficulties on the Oregon Trail were met near the start as well as farther along the way is illustrated by the experience of an unnamed man who told of crossing the Missouri at Fort Kearney.[22]

Went up to the ferry. Mr. H's and Mrs. S's wagons went over safe. Then Mr. S's family wagon and five yoke of cattle and all of Mr. S's family except two boys went on the ferry boat, and when they were about half way across the boat began to sink. They tried to drive the cattle off, but could not in time to save the boat from sink-

ing. My family are still on the east side and I—— S—— with his teams. We witnessed the scene, and could do nothing. Mrs. Sands, the baby and next youngest were all under water, but the men of the boat got into the river and took them out, and the rest of the family got up on the wagon cover and saved themselves from drowning. Mr. R jumped overboard and thought he could swim to shore, but he was drowned. . . . By the assistance of one of the other boats the rest were saved, but we thought from where we were that it was impossible, that they could all be saved. Well, I paid a man fifteen cents for taking my wife and little children across in a skiff. They have no skiff at the ferry, but they have three good ferry boats that they work by hand. But the men here are as near heathen as they can be, and they go for shaving the emigrants.

The figures of emigration along the Trail from 1841 to 1852 has been carefully compiled.[23]

At the close of 1841 there were in Oregon, Americans								400
The number of emigrants during					1842	was	105 to	137
"	"	"	"	"	1843	"	875 to	1,000
"	"	"	"	"	1844	"		700
"	"	"	"	"	1845	"		3,000
"	"	"	"	"	1846	"		1,350
"	"	"	"	"	1847	"	4,000 to	5,000
"	"	"	"	"	1848	"		700
"	"	"	"	"	1849	"		400
"	"	"	"	"	1850	"		2,000
"	"	"	"	"	1851	"		1,500
"	"	"	"	"	1852	"		2,500

And as a result of this steady inflow of the virile population of the East, Oregon became American territory. Benton[24] called attention to the fact that the Oregon emigration from the United States "was not an act of government leading the people and protecting them, but, like all the other great emigrations and settlements of that race (Anglo-Saxon) on our continent, it was the act of the people, going forward without government aid or countenace, establish-

ing their possession, and compelling the government to follow with its shield and spread it over them. So far as the action of the government was concerned, it operated to endanger our title to the Columbia, to prevent emigration, and to incur the loss of the country."

On August 5, 1846, the Oregon Country became a part of the United States, and from that day the emigrants who were taking the longest outward bound movement ever made by an Aryan people knew that they were only going to another section of their own land.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

(See Bibliography)

1. "American History and Its Geographic Conditions," p. 211.
2. "The American Fur Trader," Quoted in *Fremont and '49*, p. 81.
3. *Christian Advocate and Journal* and *Zion's Herald*, March 22, 1833, p. 2.
4. "Winning the Oregon Country," p. 50.
5. Ibid., p. 73.
6. "Oregon: The Struggle for Possession."
7. "The River of the West," p. 201.
8. Ibid., p. 209.
9. "Oregon: The Struggle for Possession," p. 146.
10. Quoted in "A Lecture on the Oregon Territory," p. 8.
11. "Travels in the Great Western Prairies," p. 77.
12. Ibid., p. 78.
13. "The River of the West," p. 279.
14. "A Journey to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1839," p. 27.
15. "Recollections of an Old Pioneer," p. 65.
16. "A Day with the Cow Column in 1843," p. 379.
17. "History of Oregon," p. 81.
18. "Recollections of William M. Case," p. 270.
19. "The California and Oregon Trail," pp. 9, 14, 46, 71, 94, 107.
20. "Reminiscences of Hugh Cosgrove," p. 257.
21. "A Ride Over the Rocky Mountains," p. 81.
22. "The Oregon Trail," p. 356.
23. Ibid., p. 370.
24. Quoted, "Fremont and '49," p. 160.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ACROSS THE PLAINS TO CALIFORNIA

CROSSING THE PLAINS

What great yoked brutes with briskets low,
With wrinkled neck of buffalo,
With round, brown, liquid, pleading eyes,
That turned so slow and sad to you,
That shone like love's eyes soft with tears,
That seemed to plead, and make replies,
The while they bowed their necks and drew
The creaking load; and looked at you.
Their sable briskets swept the ground,
Their cloven feet kept sober sound.

Two sullen bullocks led the line,
Their great eyes shining bright like wine;
Two sullen captive kings were they,
That had in time held herds at bay,
And even now they crushed the sod
With stolid sense of majesty,
And stately stepped and stately trod,
As if 'twere something still to be
Kings even in captivity.

—Joaquin Miller.

I. A TRAGEDY OF THE TRAIL

"I soon shall be in 'Frisco,
And then I'll look around,
And when I see the gold lumps there
I'll pick 'em off the ground.
I'll scrape the mountains clean, my boys,
I'll drain the rivers dry,
A pocket full of rocks bring home,
So, brothers, don't you cry.*

THE overland route to California followed the Oregon Trail from St. Joseph or Independence, along the Platte river, to Fort Laramie, and, at first, on to a point about one hundred miles from Fort Hall, then to the headwaters of the Humboldt river. Later the traveler to California parted company at Bear river with those who were bound for Oregon. From the Humboldt the route was west to the Truckee river, up the stream to Truckee Pass, then down the western slope of the mountains to the Bear river of California and the Sacramento Valley.[1]

Thomas J. Farnham, in 1843, gave these clear directions for those who wished to go to California:[2]

Land on the north side of the mouth of the Platte; follow up that stream to the Forks, 400 miles; in this distance there is only one stream where a raft will be needed, and that near the Missouri; all the rest are fordable. At the Forks, take the north side of the North one; 14 days travel to the Black Hills; thence leaving the river bank, strike off in a North West direction to the Sweet-Water trail, at Independence Rock, (a large rock in the plains on which the old trappers many years ago carved the word "Independence" and their own names; oval in form); follow up the Sweet-

* Stanza of a song popular with the California pioneers.

water 3 days; cross it and go to the head, eight or ten days' travel this; then cross over westward to the head waters of a small creek running southwardly into the Platte, thence westward to Big Sandy creek 2 days, (this creek is a large stream coming from Wind river mountain in the North); thence 1 day to Little Sandy Creek—thence westward over 3 or 4 creeks to Green River. Strike it at the mouth of Horse creek—follow it down three days to Pilot Bute; then a strike westward one day to Hams Fork of Green River—2 days up Ham's Fork; thence west one day to Muddy Branch of Great Bear River—down it one day to Great Bear River; down this 4 days to Soda Springs; turn to the right up a valley a quarter of a mile below the Soda Springs; follow it up to a North West direction 2 days to its head; then take the left hand valley leading over the dividing ridge; 1 day over to the waters of Snake River at Fort Hall; thence down Snake River 20 days to the junction of the Lewis and Clark Rivers—or 20 days' travel westwardly by the Mary's River; thence through a natural and easy passage in the California Mountains to the navigable waters of the San Joaquin—a noble stream emptying into the Bay of San Francisco.

Emigrants began to flock to California over this route almost immediately after the war with Mexico. Among the early emigrants the Donner party was notable because of the tragic end of the expedition.

On April 15, 1846, thirty-one men, women and children started from Springfield, Illinois, on what they thought would be a five months' journey to the Pacific Coast. James F. Reed organized the party, but it took its name from the Donner brothers, George and Jacob, neighbors of the Reeds, because of the tragic fate which befell them on the way.

There were sixteen juvenile members of the expedition, including Eliza Donner, who was five years old at the time, and Virginia Reed, both of whom later wrote stories of the journey that are as absorbing as any of the records of pioneer travel in America.

Virginia Reed (Murphy) has given a picturesque description of the equipment provided by her father:[3]

Our family wagon . . . was what might be called a two-story wagon or "Pioneer palace car," attached to a regular immigrant train. My mother, though a young woman, was not strong, and had been in delicate health for many years, yet when sorrows and dangers came upon her she was the bravest of the brave. Grandma Keyes, who was seventy-five years of age, was an invalid, confined to her bed. Her sons in Springfield, Gersham and James W. Keyes, tried to dissuade her from the long and fatiguing journey, but in vain; she would not be parted from my mother, who was her only daughter. So the car in which she was to ride was planned to give comfort. The entrance was on the side, like that of an old-fashioned stage coach, and one stepped into a small room, as it were, in the centre of the wagon. At the right and left were spring seats with comfortable high backs, where one could sit and ride with as much ease as on the seat of a Concord coach. In this little room was placed a tiny sheet-iron stove, whose pipe, running through the top of the wagon, was prevented by a circle of tin from setting fire to the canvas cover. A board about a foot wide extended over the wheels on either either side the full length of the wagon, thus forming the foundation for a large and roomy second story in which were placed our beds. Under the spring seats were compartments in which were stored many articles useful for the journey, such as a well filled work basket and a full assortment of medicines, with lint and bandages for dressing wounds. Our clothing was packed—not in Saratoga trunks—but in strong canvas bags plainly marked. Some of mama's young friends added a looking-glass, hung directly opposite the door, in order, as they said, that my mother might not forget to keep her good looks, and strange to say, when we had to leave this wagon, standing like a monument on the Salt Lake desert, the glass was still unbroken. I have often thought how pleased the Indians must have been when they found this mirror which gave them back the picture of their own dusky faces.

We had two wagons loaded with provisions. Everything in that line was bought that could be thought of. My father started with supplies enough to last us through the first winter in California, had we made the journey in the usual time of six months. Knowing that books were always scarce in a new country, we also took a good library of standard works. We even took a cooking stove which never had had a fire in it, and was destined never to have, as we cached it in the desert. Certainly no family ever started across the plains with more provisions or a better outfit for the journey; and yet we reached California almost destitute and nearly out of clothing.

According to Eliza Donner [4] the equipment provided by her father and her uncle was quite different. She saw three big, white-covered wagons brought into the yard, and watched her parents as they loaded them. In one wagon they placed seed and farming implements for their own use in California, as well as laces, muslins, satins and velvets which they hoped to trade for land. The second wagon held the supplies of food and clothing for the journey, as well as the tents and other things to be used in camp, and the bright-colored garments, beads, necklaces, looking-glasses, and so forth, with which unfriendly Indians were to be appeased. The third wagon was to be the family home on wheels. Each wagon was to be drawn by three yoke of sturdy oxen. Three extra yoke of oxen, five saddle horses, beef cattle, and a dog were to follow the wagons.

It was a happy moment for Eliza and her sisters when the signal was given to start. They wondered why there were tears in their mother's eyes as they left the old home and passed the familiar orchards and the fields beyond.

All went well for weeks. On May 19 the company overtook the caravan of which Edwin Bryant was a member, and were admitted to it by unanimous vote. The Donners made quite an addition to a company that already numbered ninety-eight fighting men, fifty women, forty-six wagons,

and three hundred and fifty cattle. In fact, the company was so large that it was divided in two parts for convenience in traveling. These divisions were known as the California and the Oregon party.

That day was a festive occasion in camp. "Our cattle were allowed to rest, while the men were hunting and fishing, the women spread the family washings on the boughs and bushes." . . . Eliza wrote.[5] "We children, who had been confined to the wagon so many hours each day, stretched our limbs, and scampered off on Mayday frolics. We waded the creek, made mud pies, and gathered posies in the narrow glade between the cottonwood, beech and alder trees.

Arrangements were made here for the government of the emigrant train, made up of lawyers, journalists, teachers, students, farmers and day-laborers, a minister, a carriage-maker, a cabinet-maker, a stone-mason, a jeweler, and a blacksmith. A captain was chosen by all, and all plans of action and rules and regulations were proposed at a general meeting, and accepted or rejected by majority vote.

It was the captain's duty to preside at meetings, head the train, locate camping grounds, select crossings over fordable streams, and direct the construction of rafts and other expedients for transportation over deep waters.

Grandma Keyes had improved during the first weeks of the journey, but three days after the Big Blue river was reached she died. Her coffin was hewed out of a cottonwood tree and she was buried under an oak tree, a stone bearing a crude inscription marking the spot.

After the funeral the party was ready to proceed, but there was delay because the Big Blue was in flood, and there was no ford. Accordingly, as Virginia Reed wrote,

> the men went to work cutting down trees, hollowing out logs and making rafts. . . . These logs, about twenty-five feet in length, were united by cross timbers, forming rafts,

which were firmly lashed to stakes driven into the bank. Ropes were attached to both ends, by which the rafts were pulled back and forth across the river. The banks of this stream being steep, our heavily laden wagons had to be let down carefully with ropes, so that the wheels might run into the hollowed logs. This was no easy task when you take into consideration that in these wagons were women and children, who could cross the rapid river in no other way. Finally the dangerous work was accomplished and we resumed our journey.

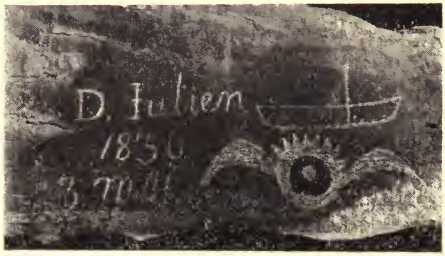
After the river was safely crossed the journey was continued through a pleasant country. "How I enjoyed riding my pony, galloping over the plain, gathering wild flowers!" was one of Virginia Reed's memories of those days. "At night the young folks would gather about the camp fire chatting merrily, and often a song would be heard, or some clever dancer would give us a barn-door jig on the hind-gate of a wagon."

On June 16 Mrs. George Donner wrote a letter from the South Fork of the Nebraska, which was sent back to Illinois by returning pioneers:

To-day, at morning, there passed, going to the States, seven men from Oregon, who went out last year. . . . They met the advance Oregon caravan about 150 miles west of Fort Laramie, and counted in all for Oregon and California (excepting ours) 478 wagons. There are in our company over 40 wagons, making 518 in all; and there are said to be yet 20 behind. To-morrow we cross the river, and, by reckoning, will be over 200 miles from Fort Laramie, where we intend to stop and repair our wagon wheels. They are nearly all loose, and I am afraid we will have to stop soon if there can be found wood suitable to heat our tires. There is no wood here, and our women and children are out now getting buffalo chips to burn in order to do the cooking. These chips burn well.

When near Great Salt Lake the emigrant train divided, the larger portion deciding to keep to the old road to Cali-

DONNER MONUMENT, DONNER LAKE, CALIFORNIA
(Dedicated June 6, 1918, on the spot where many of the Donner party perished)



INSCRIPTION ON
ROCK OF HELL ROARING
CANYON, UTAH

From Bayard Taylor's "El Dorado"

SAN FRANCISCO IN NOVEMBER, 1848

From Bayard Taylor's "El Dorado"

SAN FRANCISCO IN NOVEMBER, 1849

fornia, while the Donners, the Reeds and many others, eighty-seven in all, chose what was known as the Hastings Cut-off. This route, which passed along the southern shores of the lake, was said to shorten the trip to California at least three hundred miles before it rejoined the Fort Hall Emigrant Road on the Humboldt. The party that remained in the old road reached California in good time, but the Donner party rode forward to hardship, disaster and death.

A few days showed the travelers that the road was not as it had been represented by Lansford W. Hastings, who had named the cut-off, and who had promised to guide the travelers. Virginia Reed wrote:

We were seven days in reaching Weber Cañon, and Hastings, who was guiding a party in advance of our train, left a note by the wayside warning us that the road through Weber Cañon was impassable and advising us to select a road over the mountains, the outline of which he attempted to give on paper. These directions were so vague that C. T. Stanton, William Pike, and my father rode on in advance and overtook Hastings and tried to induce him to return and guide our party. He refused, but came back over a portion of the road, and from a high mountain endeavored to point out the general course. Over this road my father traveled alone, taking notes, and blazing trees, to assist him in retracing his course, and reaching camp after an absence of four days. Learning of the hardships of the advance train, the party decided to cross towards the lake. Only those who have passed through this country on horseback can appreciate the situation. There was absolutely no road, not even a trail. The cañon wound around among the hills. Heavy underbrush had to be cut away and used for making a road bed. While cutting our way step by step through the "Hastings Cut-off," we were overtaken and joined by the Graves family, consisting of W. F. Graves, his wife and eight children, his son-in-law, Jay Fosdick, and a young man by the name of John Snyder.

Then came a desert which Donner had been told was only forty miles wide, and what was thought to be an ample supply of water was taken. But the waste proved to be twice the expected distance.

It was a dreary, desolate, alkali waste; not a living thing could be seen; it seemed as though the hand of death had been laid upon the country. We started in the evening, traveled all that night, and the following day and night—two nights and one day of suffering from thirst and heat by day and piercing cold by night. When the third day came and we saw the barren waste stretching away apparently as boundless as when we started, my father determined to go ahead in search of water. Before starting he instructed the drivers, if the cattle showed signs of giving out, to take them from the wagons and follow him. He had not been gone long before the oxen began to fall to the ground from thirst and exhaustion. They were unhitched at once and driven ahead. My father coming back met the drivers with the cattle within ten miles of water and instructed them to return as soon as the animals had satisfied their thirst. He reached us about daylight. We waited all that day in the desert looking for the return of our drivers, the other wagons going on out of sight. Towards night the situation became desperate and we had only a few drops of water left; another night there meant death. We must set out on foot and try to reach some of the wagons. Can I ever forget that night in the desert, when we walked mile after mile in the darkness, every step seeming to be the very last we could take! Suddenly all fatigue was banished by fear; through the night came a swift rushing sound of one of the young steers crazed by thirst and apparently bent upon our destruction. My father, holding his youngest child in his arms, and keeping us all close behind him, drew his pistol, but finally the maddened beast turned and dashed off into the darkness. Dragging ourselves along about ten miles, we reached the wagon of Jacob Donner. The family were all asleep, so we children lay down on the ground. A bitter wind swept over the desert, chilling us through and through. We crept

closer together, and when we complained of the cold, papa placed all five of our dogs around us, and only for the warmth of these faithful creatures we should doubtless have perished.

The stampeded cattle were not found, though a week was spent in searching for them. All the Reed wagons had to be abandoned, except one, which was drawn by oxen supplied by more fortunate members of the caravan.

Then came a shortage of provisions, with California still hundreds of miles away. The situation was made still worse by the coming of an early snow-storm which left the hills white and made the crossing of the mountains impossible. At last, however, the party camped within three miles of the summit. Virginia Reed wrote:

That night came the dreaded snow. Around the campfires under the trees great feathery flakes came whirling down. The air was so full of them that one could see objects only a few feet away. The Indians knew we were doomed, and one of them wrapped his blanket about him, and stood all night under a tree. We children slept soundly on our cold bed of snow with a soft white mantle falling over us so thickly that every few moments my mother would have to shake the shawl—our only covering—to keep us from being buried alive. In the morning the snow lay deep on mountain and valley. With heavy hearts we turned back to a cabin that had been built by the Murphy-Schallenberger party two years before. We built more cabins and prepared as best we could for the winter.

Storm followed storm until the snow was fourteen feet deep. Food was exhausted. The frozen bodies of the few cattle left were devoured. At last there was nothing left to eat but raw hides which, when boiled, became simply a pot of glue. Many attempts were made to push across the mountains, but all failed, except that made by the "Forlorn Hope." Of the ten men and five women in this party eight men perished on the way. But at last they reached Sutter's Fort.

Their famished faces told the story. Cattle were killed and men were up all night drying beef and making flour by hand mills, nearly 200 pounds being made in one night, and a party of seven, commanded by Captain Reasen P. Tucker, were sent to our relief by Captain Sutter and the alcalde, Mr. Sinclair.

The men in the relief party said that they had been compelled to leave by the way most of their supplies of food; these had been cached for the use of those who would leave the camp by the lake for the valley. There was only a little left. Small quantities of flour were carefully measured out, together with a little jerked beef, and two small biscuits for each of the famishing people.

On February 22 a party of twenty-three, including Virginia Reed, started out. She wrote:

With sorrowful hearts we traveled on, walking through the snow in single file. The men wearing snow-shoes broke the way, and we followed in their tracks. At night we lay down on the snow to sleep, to awake to find our clothing all frozen, even to our shoe-strings. At break of day we were again on the road, owing to the fact that we could make better time over the frozen snow. The sunshine, which it would seem would have been welcome, only added to our misery. The dazzling reflection of the snow was very trying to the eyes, while its heat melted our frozen clothing, making it cling to our bodies. My brother was too small to step in the tracks made by the men, and in order to travel he had to place his knee on the little hill of snow after each step and climb over. Mother coaxed him along, telling him that every step he took he was getting nearer papa and nearer something to eat. He was the youngest child that walked over the Sierra Nevada. . . . When we reached the place where the cache had been made by hanging the food on a tree, we were horrified to find that wild animals had destroyed it, and again starvation stared us in the face. But food was brought almost at once by another relief party from Sutter's Fort.

In the meantime those who remained at Donner Lake were suffering torture. George Donner was unable to travel because of an accident, and his wife refused to leave him. Two of the children had gone with Virginia Reed, but Eliza remained with her parents. Later she wrote of the failing food supply:

The last food which I remember seeing in our camp before the arrival of the Second Relief was a thin mold of tallow which mother had fried out of the trimmings of the jerked beef brought by the First Relief. She had let it harden in a pan, and after all other rations had given out, she cut daily from it three small white squares for each of us, and we nibbled off the four corners very slowly and then around and around the edges of the precious pieces until they became too small for us to hold between our fingers.

A second and a third relief party arrived, and by degrees the survivors of the unfortunate party made their weary way through the trackless snow over the mountains, into the valley of the Sacramento, and on to Sutter's Fort.

But Eliza's father and mother died by the lake. Forty-two of the eighty-three who had been overtaken by winter perished. Only eighteen of the thirty-one who had left Springfield in the original party reached California.

II. ACROSS THE DESERT IN SAFETY

Not with the bold array
Of armies dread, came they
  Proud conquest on;
Through a long warfare rude,
With patient hardihood,
By toil and strife and blood,
  The soil was won.

Won from the Redman's lair,
To be an Eden fair
  To us and ours;
Won as the peaceful home
Of age and beauty's bloom,
While day shall chase night's gloom,
  While time endures.

—Lewis C. Cist.

A LITTLE more than two years after the survivors of the Donner party reached Sutter's Fort, on March 18, 1849, John Evans Brown started from Asheville, North Carolina, for Indianapolis. The diary of the trip [6] is one of the valuable documents of the days of the pioneers.

The entry of April 18 was made at Independence. Then the party adopted a constitution and bought eight mules for the six men. The total cost of the outfit was $1,120, or $186.66 per man.

Among the entries were:

May 11. The Buncome Co., the Carson Co. and the Wilson Co. passed this evening, and we followed them in the early morning.

May 14. We made an early start in a very heavy rainstorm, and when out a mile the tongue of my waggon was broken through by the stubbornest of the mules, and we

were compelled to unhitch and make a new tongue, but caught up with the camp at night. Taylor is very ill with the cholera. The Kentucky Company joined us.

May 16. We crossed the line of the United States. We passed a new made grave of an emigrant.

. . . By Thursday we passed the Pioneer line, but at dinner they passed us. . . . We drove to the forks of the road (one goes [left] to Santa Fé and the other [right] to Oregon). We camped near an Indian hut which had been deserted in consequence of cholera breaking out in emigrant camps near by.

. . . On Saturday the axletree of one of the Kentucky waggons broke and we were compelled to stop until noon when we drove 1 mile, crossing a creek, and here we stopped, being detained a length of time in assisting each waggon up the steep bank.

Three days later the party drove ten miles to the crossing of the Kansas river where all camped in order that the whole train might be taken over in one day and so continue together.

The diary continued:

Robert and Clayton Reeves came into camp after we crossed the Kansas. There are but few women traveling.

On Thursday the 24th, we left camp at 7 o'clock and drove 15 miles to Manacursa Creek, where we camped. The rain came down in torrents and our tents had 4 inches of water running through them. Wood of Buncombe is ill with symptoms of Cholera.

. . . Detained to dig a road. . . . Drove to a creek which was very high and we were obliged to build a raft to cross. H. A. Wood died of Cholera to-night, after two days' illness.

. . . One of the Kentucky waggons broke down. Five of our men were taken ill with cholera and everything seems sad; misfortune hangs over us.

. . . A Kentucky waggon broke down again, and the rain came down in torrents. Ten men are sick with the cholera.

Three men of the Kentucky Company returned from here, because there was so much sickness and because of the disagreeable weather.

Sunday, June 10. We held a meeting of the Company, and determined to rest all power and authority in one man. A committee of three was appointed to draft regulations for the government of the party.

From a person returning to the States we learned there was much suffering in the train ahead of us, mules and oxen were giving out on account of the insufficient grass. We found three fresh graves of emigrants who died of the cholera.

The Messrs. Reeves again overtook us and camped near. They are travelling in an ox train and will reach California soon as we if we do not abandon stopping so often.

. . . Our men, and the men from Rutherford County, North Carolina, concluded to leave the train and endeavor to travell more expeditiously than we had been doing.

. . . Eight trains camping in sight of us . . .

. . . Reached Fort Laramie and we were determined to dispose of our heavy waggon and attach six mules to the small one, and hasten on our road. We busied ourselves in condensing our load and packing in one waggon, and finished at three o'clock. All the trunks, part of the Bacon, and everything that was not absolutely necessary was thrown aside.

Here there was a difficulty. An officer at Fort Laramie claimed the best mule, for it bore the government brand. This mule had been bought at Independence in the regular way. Later this was given back. The comments made on these events by the diarist are interesting. When the mule was taken he wrote:

The protection afforded to emigrants by the chain of Military Posts is only another name for robbery. An emigrant can purchase nothing except at an exorbitant price, and in the present instance suffers himself to be stript of his all, when far away from home.

After the animal had been returned he said:

The Commanding Officer of the Fort conducts himself with much credit. He is a Gentleman in every sense of the word, and will be of infinite service to emigrants.

Another entry:

Owing to all the trains in the neighborhood of ours leaving camp on Sunday, we concluded to drive also, as the Indians are on the hill near by, and will take advantage of our situation. We drove eight mules to a creek where we found a good grass and we put our mules out, as Harris and Mason concluded to return to our Monday's Camp, for our only bucket which was left inadvertently, and when they returned it was too late for us to drive any distance, therefore we rested the ballance of the day at this creek, with only one train in sight.

On Monday we left Camp early, with five Scotchmen, who came up last night in a waggon. They had separated from their party on account of their slow driving.

Early Tuesday morning we made ready to leave, when we were surprised to see a man ride into camp, and claim two horses, which had been brought into our Company the night before by a young man of respectable appearance, who requested permission to remain. . . . It appears that a Company from New York had made arrangements to pack at the fort and in doing so rather inconvenienced the young man and he decided to take two of the horses and go ahead. . . . The horses were handed over, and the young man returned in captivity to the fort.

On Wednesday I awoke and rose early from my bed, which was nothing more than a buffalo robe stretched on the ground with the clear blue sky for covering. We were compelled to herd our mules on the hills near by camp, and, being apprehensive of the Indians, we concluded to lay near the stock. There were six trains in sight of us.

Saturday, 7th. About five o'clock we reached the Alkali Springs. . . . The water tastes like Seidlitz Powder.

Sunday. The ox teams that have preceded us have lost many oxen from the use of this water, and I fear many will

not profit by their example. We drove four miles to Willow Springs, where there is plenty of water . . . the many dead oxen lying near the water induced us to continue our journey. . . . There is a fine spring two miles from the Willow Spring, but we missed it and drove four miles to the foot of a hill, where we struck the small creek, which had been trickling down the swamp to our left for six miles. The water is not good.

. . . We overtook Mr. Briddleman of Sullivan County, East Tennessee. . . . Next day I reached a camp of two wagons, which I found were from Tennessee. On the 16th I met two persons in an Ohio train from Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Also met a man and lady from Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

19th. Called on Miss Elizabeth White of Pleasant Hill, Maryland. . . . Her parents are emigrating at an advanced age, with her quite young.

Friday. While we were grassing our stock, several trains appeared on the hills, two miles behind us, which set us to work to gearing and just started when Miss White, accompanied by a young gallant of the train, rode up and informed us that their train was near by. She rode along with us, entertaining us very agreeably for three miles, when she stopped to wait for the Company.

Sunday. Dr. Stone devoted the greater part of the evening to baking Apple Pies, which were a very great luxury with us, on the plains. Now we can appreciate the fine dinners set before us at our homes and must acknowledge that we were too choice when so much was to be had.

. . . The fine grass induced us to believe our mules perfectly safe, without being staked, but we discovered our mistake about ten o'clock when we were aroused by running of the whole stock and the cries of the guard. All immediately gave chase and in about one and a half miles one of the Steels and myself succeeded in outrunning them and bringing them toward the camp. I had run the whole distance in my stocking feet, without hat, coat or jacket and at my fastest, so when I found myself ahead I was nearly done out. . . . I was so little fit to stand guard in a few hours after returning to camp, much less the part of

preceding watch, as I was awakened by Taylor an hour before the time, through mistake.

. . . Camped near the junction of the Fort Hall and cut-off roads. . . . The road most certainly is in a more direct course and will also compare with the road via Fort Hall, for many miles it is a little southwest in its direction and is in fine order, lying in Cannons where nature has done everything for a natural road. . . . Taking everything together the road is excellent and will save to the emigrants at least three days' travell with teams.

Saturday, August 4. The road is very bad and at one hill we were compelled to let the waggon down with rope.

Sunday being the day of rest, we concluded to remain at our Camp untill Monday. The Dayton Company started at daylight and we had to do the same Monday in order to overtake them this week.

Monday. . . . The waggon belonging to Steel and Brothers (who have been travelling with us for a short distance this side of Fort Laramie) capsized in crossing a deep ravine full of water. The driver drove too far to the right and all fell off on bank, four feet into the water. Fortunately nothing was hurt. We travelled up the creek, ten miles, passing on the way many ox trains.

. . . Entering the Cannon, we crossed the creek nine times, many of the places being exceedingly difficult. The ox train being very slow in crossing detained us till after night in reaching the valley, where we found a company from Tennessee.

Sunday, August 12. . . . We were this day invited to attend preaching at the camp of the Union Band of Illinois, about one mile above us on the Creek. This was an opportunity that we had not met with lately and we very gladly availed ourselves of it.

Friday. . . . Just as we were starting one of our Company took all his baggage out of the waggon, with the determination of leaving us. Nothing was said to induce him to remain, as he was a very disagreeable man, though we lost much by suffering him to leave us after coming so far. . . . Not a day for the last two months but he was quarrel-

ing with some one of the company. None of us bid him good-bye. . . .

. . . The Indians are very troublesome, having stole many cattle from trains last here. Eight Indians have been killed by the Whites in the last fortnight, and I much fear they will become more troublesome than ever.

. . . The mules were very much jadded to-day, caused, I think, by eating bullrushes. . . . Our mules are much better, but the horses of the Messrs. Steele are still affected, so much so that it is with difficulty they travel. Owing to these horses being so jadded we did not start from noon time untill three o'clock and then drove twelve miles to good grass. The Messrs. Steele did not reach our camp that evening, therefore we were alone, and will not have them with us on the end of our journey. We all regretted leaving them, as they were careful and steady men, and agreed with us in our travelling better than any we have met on the road, but we could not think of losing time in waiting for the horses to recruit.

Sunday. This Evening much resembled the quiet Sunday Evening that we were accustomed to have at home with our friends. We often think of home and the many friends we have left, but at no time does the feeling make such an impression on one's mind as on a beautiful Sabbath Evening, when the same stillness prevails over everything. We often wish ourselves at home and with the permission of Providence we will gratify that wish at no very distant day, at least so soon as we can in a measure fill our pockets with the "Dust."

Bayard Taylor longed to experience for himself the trials of those who crossed the plains to California, but he was compelled to choose the route by way of the Isthmus of Panama. However, when he reached California he took every opportunity to talk with the hardy men who had made their way by land. And when he wrote the account of his own trip,[7] he told enthusiastically of some of the incidents of which he had learned:

Sacramento City was the goal of the emigration by the northern route. From the beginning of August to the last of December scarcely a day passed without the arrival of some man or company of men and families, from the mountains, to pitch their tents for a few days on the bank of the river and rest from their months of hardship. The vicissitudes through which these people had passed, the perils they had encountered and the toils they had endured seem to me without precedent in History. The story of thirty thousand souls, accomplishing a journey of more than two thousand miles through a savage and but partially explored wilderness, crossing on their way two mountain chasms equal to the Alps in height and asperity, besides broad tracts of burning desert, and plains of nearly equal desolation, where a few . . . stunted shrubs and springs of brackish water were their only stay, has in it so much of heroism, of daring and of sublime endurance that we may vainly question the records of any age for its equal. Standing as I was at the closing stage of that grand pilgrimage, the sight of these adventurers as they came in day by day, and the hearing of their stories, each of which had its own peculiar and separate character, had a more fascinating, because more real interest than the tales of the glorious old travelers which so impress us in childhood. . . .

It is estimated that about four thousand persons perished from cholera. Men were seized without warning with the most violent symptoms, and instances occurred in which the sufferer was left to die alone by the roadside, while his panic-stricken companions pushed forward, vainly trusting to get beyond the influence of the epidemic. Rough boards were placed at the graves of those who were buried near the trail, but there are hundreds of others lying unmarked by any memorial, on the bleak surface of the open plain and among the barren depths of the mountains.

The cholera reached St. Louis from New Orleans about the time of the departure from Independence, and overtook them before they were fairly embarked on the wilderness. By the time the companies reached Fort Laramie the

epidemic had expended its violence. But here began new trials.

Up and down the mountains that hem in the Sweetwater Valley over the . . . Wind River chain—through the Devil's Gate, and past the stupendous mass of Rock Independence—they toiled slowly to the South Pass, descended to the tributaries of the Colorado and plunged into the rugged defiles of the Timpanozu Mountains. Here the pasturage became scarce and the companies were obliged to take separate trails in order to find sufficient grass for their teams. Many who, in their anxiety to get forward with speed, had thrown away a great part of the supplies that encumbered them now began to want, and were frequently reduced, in their necessity, to make use of their mules and horses for food. . . .

The progress of the emigrants along the Valley of Humboldt's River is described as having been slow and toilsome in the extreme. The River, which lies entirely within the Great Basin—whose waters like those of the uplands of Central Asia have no connexion with the sea—shrinks away towards the end of summer, and finally loses itself in the sand, at a place called the Sink. Here the single trail across the Basin divides into three branches, and the emigrants, leaving the scanty meadows about the Sink, have before them an arid desert, varying from fifty to eighty miles in breadth, according to the route which they take. Many companies, arriving at this place, were obliged to stop and recruit their exhausted animals, though exposed to the danger of being detained there for the whole winter, from the fall of snow on the Sierra Nevada.

Then came the Sierra Nevada, many of whose passes had never been crossed before 1849.

In getting down from the summit . . . emigrants told me they were frequently obliged to take . . . the wagon and lower it with rope; but for the slow descents which followed another plan was adopted. The wheels were all locked, and only one yoke of oxen was left in front; a middling sized

pine was then cut down, and the butt fastened to the axle-tree, the branching top dragging in the earth. The holding back of the oxen, the sliding of the locked wheels, and the resistance of the tree together formed an opposing power sufficient to admit of a slow descent; but it was necessary to observe great care lest the pace should be quickened, for the slightest start would have overcome the resistance and given oxen, wagon and tree together a momentum that would have landed them at the bottom in a very different condition.

By 1852 there were 250,000 men in California. Thousands of them had braved the perils of the overland journey, and so were hardened for the strain of pioneer life in the Golden West.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

(See Bibliography)

1. "American History and Its Geographic Conditions," p. 218.
2. "Travels in the Great Western Prairies," p. 23.
3. "Across the Plains in the Donner Party," p. 409.
4. "Expedition of the Donner Party and Its Tragic Fate," p. 5.
5. Ditto, p. 12.
6. "Journey Across the Plains to the Pacific," p. 130.
7. "El Dorado," Vol. I, p. 35.

TO THE WEST

To the West! to the West! to the land of the free,
Where the mighty Missouri rolls down to the sea,
Where a man is a man if he's willing to toil,
And the humblest may gather the fruits of the soil,
Where children are blessings, and he who hath most
Hath aid to his fortune and riches to boast;
Where the young may exult, and the aged may rest,
Away, far away, to the land of the West.

To the West! to the West! where the rivers that flow,
Run thousands of miles, spreading out as they go;
Where the green waving forests that echo our call,
Are wide as old England, and free to us all!
Where the prairies, like seas where the billows have roll'd,
Are broad as the kingdoms and empires of old;
And the lakes are like oceans in storms or in rest—
Away, far away, to the land of the West.

To the West, to the West, there is wealth to be won,
The forest to clear is the work to be done;
We'll try it, we'll do it, and never despair,
While there's light in the sunshine and breath in the air.
The bold independence, that labor shall buy,
Shall strengthen our hands and forbid us to sigh;
Away! far away! let us hope for the best!
And build up new homes, in the land of the West.

—CHARLES MACKAY.

I. WITH LEWIS AND CLARK

> Room! Room to turn round in, to breathe and be free,
> And to grow to be giant, to sail as at sea,
> With the speed of the wind on a steed with his mane
> To the wind, without pathway or route or a rein.
> Room! Room to be free. . . .
>
> —Joaquin Miller.

WHILE early explorers, adventurers and trappers made use of the Missouri river, the real beginning of transportation on this waterway was not until 1803, when the acquisition of Louisiana led President Jefferson to plan an exploring expedition up the Missouri river and on to the Pacific Coast.

Of this expedition Captain Meriwether Lewis and Captain William Clark were asked to take charge. These officers of the United States Army made their start from the mouth of the Missouri on May 14, 1804.

In addition to the leaders, there were in the party nine young men from Kentucky, fourteen soldiers of the United States Army, who had volunteered for the service, two French watermen, an interpreter and hunter, and a negro servant belonging to Captain Clark. In addition to these, a corporal and six soldiers, and nine watermen were engaged for service as far as the Mandan nation.

The equipment consisted of three boats, a keel boat fifty-five feet long, drawing three feet of water, and carrying one large square sail and twenty-two oars; and two "periogues," * or open boats, one of six and the other of

* The pirogue is described as "a boat whose hull was two long canoes six feet apart, fastened together, and covered with rough flooring."

seven oars. Two horses were led along the banks of the river for the purpose of bringing home game, or hunting in case of scarcity.

From the Journal[1] kept by the explorers, as edited by Nicholas Biddle, extracts follow:

May 22. . . . Good Man's river. A small number of emigrants from the United States have settled on the banks of this creek.

May 24. Early this morning we ascended a very difficult rapid, called the Devil's Race ground, where the current sets for half a mile against some projecting rocks on the south side. We were less fortunate in attempting a second rapid of equal difficulty. Passing near the southern shore, the bank fell in so fast as to oblige us to cross the river instantly between the northern side and a sand-bar, which is actually moving and backing with the violence of the current. The boat struck on it, and would have upset immediately if the man had not jumped into the water and held her until the sand washed from under her.

June 5. . . . At eleven o'clock we met a raft made of two canoes joined together, in which two French traders were descending from eighty leagues up the Kansas river, where they had wintered and caught great quantities of beaver. . . .

June 8. . . We met with a party of three hunters from the Sioux river; they had been out for twelve months, and collected about $900 worth of peltries and furs.

June 12. . . Met two rafts loaded, the one with furs, the other with the tallow of buffalo; they were from the Sioux nation, and on their way to St. Louis; but we were fortunate enough to engage one of the men. . . .

June 15. The river being very high, the sand-bars were so rolling and numerous and the current was so strong that we were unable to stem it, even with oars added to our sails. This obliged us to go nearer the banks, which were falling in so that we could not make, though the boat was occasionally towed, more than 14 miles.

June 16. Early this morning we joined the camp of our hunters, who had provided two deer and two bear. . . .

July 3. A gentle breeze from the south carried us 11¼ miles this day.

The morning of the 4th of July was announced by the discharge of our gun. . . . Reached a creek. . . . To this creek, which had no name, we gave that of 4th of July creek. . . . After 15 miles' sail we came to on the north a little above a creek . . . which we called Independence creek, in honor of the day, which we could celebrate only by an evening gun, and an additional gill of whisky to the men.

July 7. The rapidity of the water obliged us to draw the boat along with rope. . . .

July 14. We had some hard showers of rain before seven o'clock, when we set out. We had just reached the end of the sand-island, and seen the opposite bank falling in and so lined with timber that we could not approach it without danger, when a sudden squall from the northeast struck the boat on the starboard quarter, and would certainly have dashed her to pieces on the sand island if the party had not leaped into the river and with the aid of the anchor and cable kept her off. The waves dashed over her for the space of 40 minutes, after which the river became almost instantaneously calm and smooth. The two periogues were ahead, in a situation nearly similar, but fortunately no danger was done to the boats or the loading.

July 20. . . . For a month past the party have been troubled with boils, and occasionally with the dysentery. These were large tumors, which broke out under the arms, on the legs, and generally in the parts some exposed to action, which sometimes became too painful to allow the men to work. After remaining some days, they disappeared without any correction, except a poultice of the bark of the elm, or Indian meal. This disorder, which we ascribe to the muddiness of the river water, has not affected the general health of the party.

July 21. We reached, in the rain, the mouth of the great river Platte.

July 22-26. . . . We stayed here several days, during which we dried our provisions, made new oars, and prepared our dispatches and maps of the country we had

passed for the President of the United States, to whom we intend to send this by a periogue from this place.

August 5. We set out early, and by means of our oars made 20½ miles, though the river was crowded with sandbars. . . . In the evening Captain Clark, in pursuing some game in an eastern direction, found himself at the distance of 370 yards from the camp at a point of the river whence we had come twelve miles.

August 12. . . . We stopped to take a meridian altitude, and sent a man across to our place of observation yesterday. He stepped 974 yards, and the distance we had come round was 18¾ miles.

August 20. . . . Here we had the misfortune to lose one of our sergeants, Charles Floyd. . . . He was buried on the top of the bluff with the honor due to a brave soldier; the place of his interment was marked by a cedar post. About a mile beyond this place, to which we gave his name, is a small river . . . which we called Floyd's river.*

September 11. . . . In the morning we observed a man riding on horseback toward the boat, and we were much pleased to find that it was George Shannon, one of our party, for whose safety we have been very uneasy. Our two horses having strayed from us on the 28th of August, he was sent to search for them. After he had found them he attempted to rejoin us; but seeing some other tracks, which must have been those of Indians, and which he mistook for our own, he concluded that we were ahead, and had been for 16 days following the bank of the river above us. During the first five days he exhausted his bullets, and was then nearly starved, being obliged to subsist for twelve days on a few grapes, and a rabbit, which he killed by making use of a hard piece of stick for a ball. One of his horses gave out and was left behind; the other he kept as a last resource for food. Despairing of overtaking us, he was returning down the river, in hopes of meeting some

*The character of Captain Clark's original text may be judged from the original entry as to Sergeant Floyd. "Sergeant Floyd is taken verry bad all at once with a Biliose Chorlick we attempt to reliev him without success as yet, he gets worse and we are much allarmed about his situation."

other boat; and was on the point of killing his horse, when he was so fortunate as to join us.

September 12. . . . We with great difficulty were enabled to struggle through the sand-bars, the water being very rapid and shallow, so that we were several hours in making a mile. Several times the boat whirled on a bar, when the men were obliged to jump out and prevent her from upsetting; at others, after making a way up one channel, the shoalness of the water forced us back to seek the deep channel. We advanced only four miles in the whole day.

September 14. . . . The sand-bars are very numerous, and render the river wide and shallow; this obliged the crew to get into the water and drag the boat over the bars several times.

September 21. Between one and two o'clock the sergeant on guard alarmed us by crying that the sand-bar on which we lay was sinking. We jumped up and found that both above and below our camp the sand was undermined and falling in very fast. We had scarcely got into the boats and pushed off, when the bank under which they had been lying fell in, and would certainly have sunk the two periogues if they had remained there. By the time we reached the opposite shore the ground of our camp sunk also. . . . A man, whom we had dispatched to step off the distance across the bend, made it 2000 yards; the circuit is 30 miles.

September 23. In the evening three boys of the Sioux nation swam across the river and informed us that two parties of Sioux were camped on the next river; one consisting of 80 and the second of 60 lodges, at some distance above. After treating them kindly we sent them back with a present of two carrots of tobacco to their chief, whom we invited to a conference in the morning.

Friday, September 28. . . . It was with great difficulty we could make the chiefs leave the boat. At length we got rid of all except the great chief; when, just as we were setting out, several of the chief's soldiers sat on the rope which held the boat to the shore. Irritated at this, we got everything ready to fire on them if they persisted; but the

great chief said that they were his soldiers, and only wanted some tobacco. We had already refused a flag and some tobacco to the second chief, who had demanded them with great importunity, but, willing to leave them without going to extremities, we threw over a carrot of tobacco, saying to him, "You told us that you are a great man, and have influence; now show your influence by taking the rope from those men, and we will then go without any further trouble." This appeal to his pride had the desired effect; he went out of the boat, gave his soldiers the tobacco, and, pulling the rope out of their hands, delivered it on board.

October 3. . . . The ascent soon became so obstructed by sand-bars and shoal water that, after attempting in vain several channels, we determined to rest for the night.

October 4. On examination we found that there was no outlet practicable for us in this channel, and that we must retrace our steps. We therefore returned three miles and then attempted another channel in which we were more fortunate.

On October 27, 1804, the party paused for the winter among the Mandans. Cabins and later Fort Mandan were built. On April 7, 1805, thirty-two men left Fort Mandan in canoes. On April 12 they were at the Little Missouri, 1,693 miles from the mouth of the Missouri.

On April 20 one of the canoes was all but lost by the falling in of a large part of the bank. "The wind here so strong that we could scarcely make a mile an hour, and the sudden squalls so dangerous to the small boats that we stopped for the night . . . not being able to advance more tran 6½ miles.

On April 26 the party reached the mouth of the Yellowstone river.

[On May 14th, toward evening,] the men in the hindmost canoes discovered a large brown bear lying in the open grounds, about 300 paces from the river. Six of them, all good hunters, immediately went to attack him, and concealing themselves by a small eminence, came unperceived

within 40 paces of him. Four of the hunters now fired, and each lodged a ball in his body, two of them directly through his lungs. The furious animal sprang up and ran open-mouthed upon them, as he came near, the two hunters who had reserved their fire gave him two wounds, one of which, breaking his shoulder, retarded his motion for a moment, but before they could reload he was so near that they were obliged to run to the river, and before they reached it he had almost overtaken them. Two jumped into the canoe; the other four separated and, concealing themselves in the willows, fired as fast as each could reload. They struck him several times; but instead of weakening the monster each shot seemed only to direct him toward the hunters, till at last he pursued two of them so closely that they threw aside their guns and pouches, and jumped down a perpendicular bank of 20 feet into the river. The bear sprang after them and was within a few feet of the hindmost, when one of the hunters on shore shot him in the head and finally killed him. . . .

An accident of a different nature on the same day was described:

This was the narrow escape of one of our canoes, containing all our papers, instruments, medicine, and almost every article indispensable for the success of our enterprise. The canoe being under sail, a sudden squall of wind struck her obliquely and turned her considerably. The man at the helm, who was unluckily the worst steersman of the party, became alarmed and instead of putting her before the wind luffed her up into it. The wind was so high that it forced the brace of the square-sail out of the hand of the man who was attending to it and instantly upset the canoe, which would have been turned bottom upward but for the resistance made by the awning. Such was the confusion on board, and the waves ran so high, that it was half a minute before she righted, and then was nearly full of water; but by bailing out she was kept from sinking until they rowed ashore. Besides the loss of the lives of three men, who not being able to swim would probably have perished, we should have been deprived of nearly everything necessary

for our purpose, at a distance of between 2,000 and 3,000 miles from any place where we could supply the deficiency.

May 25. Two canoes which were left behind yesterday, to bring on the game, did not join us till eight o'clock this morning when we set out with the tow line, the use of which the banks permitted.

May 27. . . . Were obliged to use the tow-line during the greater part of the day. The river has become very rapid, with a very perceptible descent.

May 29. Last night we were alarmed by a new enemy. A buffalo swam over from the opposite side to the spot where lay one of our canoes, over which he clambered to the shore; then taking fright he ran full speed up the bank toward our fires, and passed within 18 inches of the heads of some of the men, before the sentinel could make him change his course.

Until August 18 the party continued on to the extreme source of the Missouri. Fifteen months had elapsed since the trip was begun; of this time five months were spent in winter quarters. During the twelve months of toiling up the river they had covered a little more than the 3000 miles from its mouth, near St. Louis. From there the exploring party went by land across the Continental Divide, seeking the waters that led to the Pacific.

II. BY MEANS OF CORDELLE AND BRIDLE

All night above their rocky bed
  They saw the stars march slow;
The wild Sierra overhead,
  The desert's death below.

The Indian from his lodge of bark,
  The gray bear from his den,
Beyond their camp-fire's wall of dark,
  Glared on the mountain men.

. . . .

They set their faces to the blast,
  They trod the eternal snow,
And faint, worn, bleeding, hailed at last,
  The promised land below.

—John G. Whittier.

THE next historic trip on the Missouri river after the days of Lewis and Clark was made in the spring of 1811, when H. M. Brackenridge accompanied Manuel Lisa, agent of the Missouri Fur Company, on a trip up the river in the company's interest.

The voyage was made in the keel boat, the representative river craft of ante-steamboat days.[2]

It was in this boat that the merchandise for the trade was transported to the upper river, and it was used on all important military and exploring expeditions. It was a good sized boat, sixty to seventy feet long, and built on a regular model, with a keel running from bow to stern. It had fifteen to eighteen feet breadth of beam and there was a four foot depth of hold. Its ordinary draft was from twenty to thirty inches. It was built in accordance with the practice of approved shipcraft, and was a good, stanch vessel. Keelboats were generally built in Pittsburgh, at a cost of two to three thousand dollars.

For carrying freight the keelboat was fitted with what was called a cargo box, which occupied the entire body of the boat excepting about twelve feet at each end. It rose some four or five feet above the deck. Along each side of the cargo box was a narrow walk about fifteen inches wide, called the *passe avant*. On special occasions when these boats were used for passenger traffic, as on expeditions of discovery or exploration, they were fitted up with cabins and made very comfortable passenger boats.

For purposes of propulsion the boat was equipped with nearly all the power appliances known to navigation except steam. The cordelle was the main reliance. This consisted of a line nearly a thousand feet long, fastened to the top of a mast, which rose from the center of the boat to a height of about thirty feet. The boat was pulled along with this line by men on shore. In order to hold the boat from swinging around the mast, the line was connected with the bow by means of a "bridle," a short auxiliary line fastened to a loop in the bow and to a ring through which the cordelle passed. The bridle prevented the boat from swinging under the force of the wind or current when the speed was not great enough to accomplish this purpose by means of the rudder. The object in having so long a line was to lessen the tendency to draw the boat toward the shore; and the object in having it fastened to the top of the mast was to keep it from dragging, and to enable it to clear the brush along the bank.

It took from twenty to forty men to cordelle the keelboat along average stretches of the river, and the work was always one of great difficulty. There was no established towpath and the changing conditions of the river prevented the development of such a path except along a few stable stretches. It was frequently necessary to send men ahead to clear the most troublesome obstructions away. In some places, where it was impossible to walk and work at the same time, a few men would carry the end of the line beyond the obstruction, and make it fast, while the rest would get on board and pull the boat by drawing in the line. This operation was called "warping."

In places where the keel boat could not be moved by means of the rope, eight or ten men on each side would pole it along. The pole was described thus: "On one end was a ball or knob to rest in the hollow of the shoulder for the voyageur to push against, and on the other was a wooden shoe or socket." The ball was placed against the shoulder, while the pole was inclined down stream, and the pole bearers would walk along the *passe avant* already described. When the men had walked as far as they could, the pole was withdrawn, and the men walked toward the bow, that they might be ready for another push.

Other means of navigation were the oar and the sail. By means of pole and cordelle, oar and sail, some remarkable speed records were attained, as will be seen from Brackenridge's narrative.

The start of Manuel Lisa and Brackenridge was made from St. Charles, Missouri, on April 2, 1811, twenty-three days after the departure of the party of another agent of the Missouri Fur Company, named Hunt, who was accompanied by a naturalist named Bradbury. It was the purpose of Lisa to overtake the Hunt party before he reached the Sioux Country, for he felt that the safety of his party depended on the junction with the larger advance party.

The story of the trip [3] is one of the earliest records of Missouri river travel. Mr. Brackenridge wrote:

Our barge was the best that had ever ascended the river, and manned with twenty stout oars-men. As Mr. Lisa had been a sea-captain, he took much pains in rigging his boat with a good mast, and main and topsail; these being great helps in the navigation of this river. Our equipage is chiefly composed of young men, though several have already made a voyage to the upper Missouri, of which they are exceedingly proud, and on that account they claim a kind of precedence over the rest of the crew. We are, in all, twenty-five men, well armed, and completely prepared for defence. There is, besides, a swivel on the bow of the

boat which, in case of attack, would make a formidable appearance; we have also two brass blunderbusses in the cabin. . . . These preparations were absolutely necessary from the hostility of the Sioux bands. . . . The greater part of the merchandise, which consisted of strouding, blankets, lead, tobacco, knives, guns, beads, &c., was concealed in a false cabin. . . .

We had on board a Frenchman named Charbonet, with his wife, an Indian woman of the Snake nation, both of whom had accompanied Lewis and Clark to the Pacific. . . .

Thursday 4th. Last night we were completely drenched by the rain; the whole party, the bark itself, in a bad condition this morning. . . . Several deer seen. I observed on the sand-bars a kind of scaffold, ten or fifteen feet in height, which I was informed was erected by the neighboring settlers for the purpose of shooting the deer by moon light, which usually come out of the thickets at this time, to avoid the musketoes, and to sport on the smooth beach: the hunter ascend the scaffold and remains till the deer approaches.

Friday 5th. A violent storm of rain, wind and thunder compelled us to put to shore. . . . The number of trees which had lately fallen into the river, and the danger to be apprehended from others, rendered our situation exceedingly disagreeable. Towards evening a canoe with six or seven men passed. . . .

Saturday 6th. . . . Near Boon's settlement. About sixty miles from St. Charles.

Sunday 7th. Made Point Labadie. . . . Forty years ago this was thought a distant point on the Missouri, at present there are tolerable plantations everywhere through the bottom. The carcases of several drowned buffaloes passed by us; it is said that an unusual number of them has been drowned this year. Some have been seen floating on the river at St. Louis. A gentleman, lately descended, declares that he counted forty on the head of an island. . . . Passed between an island and the main shore; a very narrow channel, but the current and distance less. A channel of this sort is often taken in preference, and it is one of the means of facilitating the ascending of this uncommonly rapid

river: but there is sometimes danger of the upper end being closed with logs and billets of wood matted together, as it turned out in the present instance; fortunately after the labor of an hour we were able to remove the obstacles. . . . Having made about fourteen miles, we put to shore, after passing a very difficult *embarras* . . . at the distance of every mile or two, and frequently at less distant intervals, there are *embarras,* or rafts, formed by the collection of trees closely matted, and extending from twenty to thirty yards. The current vexed by these interruptions rushes around them with great violence and force. . . . When the oars and grapling hooks were found insufficient, the towing line was usually resorted to with success. . . . When the bank has not been washed steep, which is most usually the case, and the ground newly formed, the young trees . . . which overhang the stream, afford much assistance in pulling the boat along with the hands.

Monday 8th. . . . Came in sight of a little village called Charette. There are about thirty families here, who hunt, and raise a little corn. . . .

We have been accompanied for these two days past by a man and two lads, ascending in a canoe. This evening they encamped close by us; placing the canoe under shelter of our boat. Unsheltered, except by the trees on the bend, and a ragged quilt drawn up over a couple of forks, they abode the pelting of the pitiless storm with apparent indifference. These people were well dressed in handsome home-made cotton clothes. The man seemed to possess no small share of pride and self-importance, which, as I afterwards discovered, arose from his being a captain of militia. . . . When we were about to sit down to supper, he retired, but returned when it was over; when asked why he had not staid to do us the honor of supping with us: "I thank you, gentlemen," said he, licking his lips with satisfaction, "I have just been eating an excellent supper." He had scarcely spoken, when the patron (the fresh water sailing master) came to inform Mr. Lisa, they were begging him for a biscuit, as they had eaten nothing for two days! Our visitant was somewhat disconcerted, but passed it off with, "Poh! I'm sure they can't be suffering!"

He resides on the Gasconade; was the second family which settled in that quarter, about three years ago. He has at present about 250 men on his muster-roll. We were entertained by him with a long story of his having pursued some Pottawatomies, who had committed robberies on the settlement some time last summer; he made a narrow escape, the Indians having attacked the party in the night time, and killed four of his men, after a desperate resistance. The captain had on board a barrel of whiskey to set up tavern with, a bag of cotton for his wife to spin, and a couple of kittens.

Thursday 11th. . . . Stopped a few moments at the cabin of a Frenchman, who is beginning to open a plantation. . . . Proceeded by land, across a forest, about two miles to the village of *Cote sans Dessein* . . . a beautiful place . . . will in time become a considerable village. Has been established about three years; there are thirteen French families, and two or three of Indians. . . . From their eager inquiries after merchandise, I perceived we are already remote from the settlements.

Saturday 13th. . . . Made in the course of this day about twenty-eight miles, for which we are indebted to the favorable wind. Some of us considered this good fortune, a reward for the charity which was manifested by us yesterday in spending an hour to relieve a poor ox, which was swamped near the bank. The poor creature had remained here ten or twelve days, and the sand into which he had sunk, was become hard and solid. The wolves had paid him friendly visits from time to time, to inquire after his health, while buzzards, crows, and eagles tendered their salutations from the boughs of the neighboring trees.

Sunday 14th. . . . There is a flourishing settlement here [on the Missouri River] . . . Is but one year old . . . it consists of seventy-five families, the greater part living on the bank of the river, in the space of four or five miles. . . . Most of them have slaves. . . . We inquired for the party of which we were in chase—they had passed *nineteen* days before us.

Monday 15th. While the men were towing, they chased a she-bear into a hollow tree; we set about chopping the

From Schoolcraft's "Historical Conditions and Prospects of the Indians in the United States"

BUFFALO ON THE PRAIRIE

From a drawing by Catlin

INDIANS HUNTING THE BUFFALO

Photograph by the United States Forest Service

THE LAST OF THE BUFFALO

Photograph by the United States Forest Service

"MADAME CUFF AGAIN APPEARED" [Page 289]

tree, while several stood with guns presented to the hole at which she had entered, about twenty feet up. In a short time she put out her head and shoulders, but on receiving a volley instantly withdrew. The chopping was renewed; Madam Cuff again appeared . . . was killed with a stroke of an axe. . . . In the hollow sycamore there were found three cubs.

Tuesday 16th. . . . As it was resolved to tow, I set out with my rifle, expecting to meet the boat at the head of a long bend. This is the first excursion I have made into the country. I passed through the bottom with great difficulty, on account of the rushes, which grow as high as a man's head and are matted with vines and briars.

Wednesday 24th. Attempted a ripple this morning, and was driven back five times—we had once got within half the boat's length of being through; the bars and poles were insufficient; ten of our men leaped into the water with the cordelle, while the rest exerted ourselves with the pole, and thus by perseverance became conquerors. Passed a canoe with four men who had wintered up the Kansas, about five hundred miles; they had beaver and other furs. . . .

Thursday 25th. Came in sight of Fort Osage. . . . A number of Indians of the Osage nation . . . were scattered along the bank . . . some with old buffalo robes thrown over their shoulders, others dressed out in the gayest manner. . . . Thus far we have gained about one hundred miles upon the part of Hunt.

Friday, 26th April. . . . Passed a small encampment of hunters. The Missouri is now what the Ohio was once, the *Paradise of hunters*. . . . We have now passed the last settlement of whites. This reflection caused us all to think seriously of our situation. . . . I heaved a sigh while I reflected that I might never see it [my country] or my friends again; that my bones might be deposited on some dreary spot far from my home, and the haunts of civilized men; but this last suggested consolation, there is no spot however distant, where I may be buried, but will in time be surrounded by the habitations of Americans, the place will be marked, and approached with respect, as containing the re-

mains of one of the first who ventured into these distant and solitary regions!

Saturday 27th. . . . Met a party of traders in two canoes lashed together, which form a kind of raft, heavily laden with furs, and skins. . . . They met Hunt's party, five days ago.

Saturday 4th. . . . I overheard this evening, with considerable chagrin, while warming myself at the fire, some bitter complaints on the part of the men: they declared that it was impossible for them to stand it long, that they had never so severe a voyage. . . . Great exertions have certainly been made and no moments lost, in advancing our voyage, but much of the time we were carried along by the wind, when there was no need for any labor on the part of the men. The weather is now fine, and their labor diversified, when there is no wind, by the pole, the oars, or cordelle which is little more than a promenade along the sand bars. I represented these things to them as well as I could, and endeavored to quiet their minds.

Saturday 11th. . . . The river Platte is regarded by the navigators of the Missouri as a point of as much importance as the equinoctial line among mariners. All those who have not passed it before were required to be shaved, unless they could compromise the matter by a treat. Much merriment was indulged in the occasion. From this we enter what is called the Upper Missouri. . . .

Monday 20th. Hailed a trader, descending in a large canoe, made of skins of the buffaloes, upwards of twenty feet in length. . . . These skin canoes are stretched over the red willow, and require to be frequently exposed to the sun and dried, as they would otherwise become too heavy from the quantity of water absorbed.

Thursday 23d. . . . Espied a number of persons on a sand bar, which we at first supposed to be Indians, but on a nearer approach, recognized to be whites. Amongst them a Mons. Benit, factor of the Missouri Company, at the Mandan village. These men were descending in a small boat, with some peltries. He tells us that the Indians are ill disposed to the whites, everywhere on the Missouri.

Friday 24th. A huge buffaloe bull made his appearance

on the top of the bluff, standing almost at the edge of the precipice, and looked down upon us. It was the first we had seen. Long and matted wool hung over his head, and crowned his huge shoulders, while his body was smooth, as also the tail, except a tuft on the end. It was a striking and terrific object.

Sunday 26th. Discovered a canoe descending with two men, who prove to be those sent by us, to Hunt. They bring information that he has agreed to wait for us at the Poncas village.

Monday 27th. Arrived at the Poncas village. . . . Hunt had not waited for us, according to promise. Saw two men, who had probably deserted from him—they informed us, that as soon as he heard of our approach, which was quite unexpected, he had continued to exert himself to the utmost, to get out of our reach. The fact is, there does not exist the greatest confidence between the two commanders. Ours seems to think that it is the ambition of Hunt to pass the Sioux, who may wish to detain him by telling him that their trader is coming on with goods for them. While on the other hand, Hunt may believe that Lisa intends to pass him, and tell the same story. It is therefore determined to push our voyage, if possible still more than before.

Tuesday 28th. . . . Continued under sail the rest of the day, and the greater part of the night. . . .

Wednesday 29th. . . . Discovered an encampment of Hunt, and on examination, we discovered . . . that the fire was not yet extinguished; it is therefore but a few days since they were here. Continued under sail until 11 at night, having in little better than twenty-four hours made seventy-five miles.

Saturday June 1st. At daylight heard a number of guns fired on the hills below us on the other side of the river. We now concluded that all our precaution and labor had been in vain. That we should be robbed and killed, or at least compelled to return. They soon arrived opposite to us, with an American flag, and fired one or two guns. There was but one thing to be done, which was to cross over to them at once, and meet the worst, every man preparing himself for defence. Each rower had his gun by his side. Mr. Lisa

and myself, besides our knives and rifles, had each on a pair of pistols in our belts. On reaching the shore we discovered twelve or thirteen Indians on a log. Mr. Lisa and I leaped on shore and shook hands with them. We supposed that the principal body was concealed behind in the woods, so as to be at hand if necessary. Having no interpreter at this critical juncture we were fearful of not being understood: however, with the aid of signs . . . Mr. Lisa . . . was enabled to communicate tolerably well. He told them that he was the trader, but that he had been unfortunate, all the peltries which he had collected amongst them having been burnt, and his young men, who had passed 2 years before to go to the head of the Missouri, were attacked and distressed by the Indians of those parts who were bad people. That he was now poor, and much to be pitied; that he was going to bring back his young men, having resolved to confine himself to the lower country. He concluded, by telling them that he intended to return in three months to establish a trading house at the Cedar island, and requested the chief to send word of it to all the Sioux bands. This story, together with a handsome present, produced the desired effect, though not without some reluctance. It is two days since Hunt passed here.

Sunday 2d. . . . With much satisfaction perceived at a distance the boats of Mr. Hunt. . . . It appears . . . that we have passed all the Sioux bands, who had been seen by Hunt, but probably finding his party too strong they had resolved to stop to plunder ours, that we must have passed them in the night, or under sail, as they did not expect to hear from us so soon. Overtook Mr. Hunt's party. [The trip of 1132 miles had taken sixty-one days.] It was with real pleasure I took my friend Bradbury by the hand; I have reason to believe our meeting was much more cordial than that of the two commanders. Continued under sail in company the rest of the day, forming a handsome little fleet of five sail. . . . Encamped twelve hundred miles from the mouth of the Missouri.

. . . The party of Mr. Hunt consists of about eighty men, chiefly Indians, the rest are American hunters.

On June 26 the company reached the post of the company, 1,640 miles from the mouth of the Missouri. After spending five weeks in conference with the Arkansas, Chienne and Mandan Indians, Mr. Brackenridge and Mr. Bradbury set out on their return, in two boats, with six men in each.

"My order was to go by day and night if possible, and not to stop for any Indians," Mr. Brackenridge wrote, "the water was extremely high, and with the assistance of six oars, we were able to make little short of twelve miles an hour."

The voyage was without incident. A distance of one thousand miles was covered in eight or nine days, without meeting a single soul. Early in August the party arrived in St. Louis, having made "fourteen hundred and fifty miles in little better than fourteen days."

III. EARLY STEAMBOATING ON THE MISSOURI

Ay, this is freedom!—these pure skies
Were never stained with village smoke;
The fragrant wind, that through them flies,
Is breathed from wastes by plow unbroke.
Here, with my rifle and my steed,
And her who left the world for me,
I plant me, where the red deer feed
In the green desert—and am free.
—William Cullen Bryant.

THE first steamboat appeared on the Missouri in 1819. This was the *Independence,* which ascended the stream about two hundred miles. The *Western Engineer,* a government boat, went as far as Council Bluffs the same year. Fifteen years passed before the *Assiniboine* reached a point about a hundred miles above the Yellowstone. In 1853 the *El Paso* ventured one hundred and twenty-five miles farther. In the spring of 1859 the American Fur Company's steamer *Chippewa* ascended to within fifteen miles of Fort Benton, a point 3,560 miles from the sea, and 2,565 feet above sea level. In 1860 the same vessel reached Fort Benton itself, and in 1866 a steamer reached a point thirty-one miles above Fort Benton.

William Cobbet, the English traveler, who published in 1818 an account of his visit to the United States,[4] told of seeing at Wheeling, on the Ohio river, a steamboat destined for Missouri river transportation:

The wheels are made to work in the stern of the boat, so as not to come in contact with the floating trees, snags, planters, trees tumbled headlong and fixed in the river, &c., obstructions most likely very numerous in that river.

But the placing of wheels behind only saves *them;* it is no protection against the *boat's* sinking in case of being pierced by a planter or sawyer (the same as a planter, only waving up and down). Observing this, I will suggest a plan which has occurred to me, and which, I think would effectually provide against sinking; but, at any rate, it is one which can be tried very easily and with very little expense. I would make a partition of strong plank; put it in the broadest forepart of the boat, right across, and put some good bolts under the bottom of the boat, through these planks, and screw them on the top of the deck. Then put an upright post in the inside of the boat against the middle of the plank partition, and put a spar to the upright post. The partition should be water-tight. I would then load the forepart of the boat, thus partitioned off, with lumber or such loading as is least liable to injury and best calculated to stop the progress of the sawyer after it has gone through the boat. By thus appropriating the forepart of the boat to the reception of planters and sawyers it appears to me that the other part would be secured against all intrusion.

John Lewis Peyton, who was passenger on a Missouri steamboat in 1848, gave a vivid picture of emigrants who crowded the boat.[5] Among them were a number of Europeans who showed that they had not been long in the country.

The head of this party . . . wore a blue tail-coat, covered with grease, without a single button and only a remnant of one tail. A pair of ancient cazinet trousers, in tatters at the feet, patched in the rudest manner on the knees . . . an ancient leather waistcoat and an apology for a pair of boots. Scarcely any of the men, women or children in this party were better dressed, but they had been supplied in New York and St. Louis with a few agricultural implements and carpenters' tools and expected before winter to build themselves comfortable timber houses and to get a considerable body of land prepared for a spring crop. Fortunately they were to join a party of their countrymen who had preceded them by two years and were prospering in their new home.

. . . A half dozen raw-boned Kentuckians, with iron constitutions and nerves apparently of whip cord, their wives and children, were also emigrating.

The records of the steamboat men during the early years of the steamboats, especially those that ascended to the upper Missouri, are full of incidents of peril and danger. In 1847 Captain Joseph La Barge of the steamer *Martha* had an exciting experience with Indians who were displeased because a company of government agents on board had not dealt with them to their satisfaction. While the boat was tied up at the bank, the captain said to H. M. Chittenden,[6] in telling of the incident, there was a sudden volley of fire-arms and the sound of splintered glass. This was instantly followed by an Indian yell and a rush for the boat. The Indians got full possession of the forward part of the boat and flooded the boiler grate with water, putting out the fires.

The captain learned that the Indians wished him to give up the boat to them. They promised to spare all on board if he would do as they wished, but declared that if he resisted them they would put all hands to death.

After the first rush the Indians seemed timorous. But Captain La Barge had no thought of yielding. In some way he would save the lives of those in charge. As the Indians overran the boat he thought quickly, but no plan of action occurred to him until the Indians began to hesitate, as if afraid to go further in surroundings so strange to them. The captain said, in telling the story:

This gave me time for effective measures. I had on board a light cannon of about 2½ inch caliber, mounted on four wheels. Unluckily it was at this time down in the engine room undergoing some repairs to the carriage. I had in my employ a man on whom I could absolutely rely—a brave and noble fellow, Nathan Grismore, the first engineer. Grismore had just finished the work on the cannon, and

told me he thought he could get it up the back way, since the fore part of the boat was in possession of the Indians. He got some men in line and soon hoisted the gun on deck and hauled it into the after part of the cabin. I always kept in the cabin some powder and shot for use in hunting. I got the powder, but the supply of shot was gone. Grismore promptly made up the loss with boiler rivets and the gun was heavily loaded and primed, ready for action. By this time the forward part of the cabin was crowded with Indians, who were evidently afraid something was going to happen. I lost no time in verifying their fears. As soon as the gun was loaded I lighted a cigar, and holding the smoking stump in sight of the Indians, told Campbell to tell them to get off the boat or I would blow them all to the devil. At the same time I started for the gun with the lighted cigar in my hand. The effect was complete and instantaneous. The Indians turned and fled and fairly fell over each other in their panic to get off the boat. In less time than it takes to tell it, not an Indian was in sight. I had the cannon brought to the roof, where it remained for an hour or more.

The war with Mexico, the discovery of gold in California, the Mormon emigration from Missouri to Utah, the expeditions to survey for the railroads and to carry supplies for them, and the discovery of gold in Idaho and Montana, were the causes of a continued boom in Missouri river transportation for a period of thirty years from 1846. During the early years of this period the bulk of the traffic was confined to the lower river, but during the later years the upper river shared in the prosperity.

The peculiar situation of the lower Missouri with reference to other great arteries of exploration and emigration is the explanation of the busy years that followed 1846.

Viewed from the standpoint of transportation, the Western Country in that day can be likened to a fan.[7] The handle was that part which extended from St. Louis to the mouth of the Kansas River. Thence the various routes to all parts

of the country diverged along the arms of the fan, which was outspread from Santa Fé on the South to Fort Union on the North. Most of the business below the point of divergence was done by steamboat. Vessels in large numbers plied the river over the first five hundred miles, and the amount of freight and passenger traffic carried by them was great. Boats departed daily from St. Louis, carrying an almost inconceivable variety of articles for use of the emigrants, and nearly as large a variety of the emigrants themselves. To one who witnessed this business in the noontide of its activity, it would have seemed scarcely possible that another generation should witness its total extinction.

Emigrants were carried from St. Louis to Independence and Council Bluffs, and other new posts, and from there made their way overland. In 1852 the *Saluda,* heavily laden with Mormon emigrants and their goods, was delayed by highwater in rounding a point near Lexington, Missouri. After several days the captain asked for more steam. "We'll do it, if the boat is blown to pieces," he said. The extra pressure of steam was given to him—and almost at once the boiler exploded and more than two hundred lives were lost.

A few days later an emigrant passed up the river. In his diary he said:

We get a little scared sometimes, for we hear of so many boats blown up. There was another boat blown up at Lexington last Saturday, and killed a hundred and fifty persons, the most of which were emigrants for California and Oregon. These things make us feel pretty squally, I can assure you, but it is not the way to be scared beforehand. So we boost our spirits up and push on. . . . Got to Lexington at 12 o'clock. There we found the wreck of the boat that blew up five days ago. There were about 200 people aboard, and, the nearest we could learn, about forty persons were wounded and the balance were killed.

In 1858 the demands of travel, most of them due to the emigrants, were so great that there were fifty-nine steamboats on the lower river. There were three hundred and six arrivals at Leavenworth, Kansas. The freight receipts at Leavenworth that year amounted to $166,941.35. In 1859, Chittenden says, more steamboats left St. Louis for the Missouri than for both the upper and lower Mississippi.

In 1865 one thousand passengers went as far as Fort Benton. One of them was Judge Lyman E. Munson, who was commissioned by President Lincoln as one of three United States judges of the Supreme Court of Montana. The territory was then filling up rapidly because of the gold discoveries there. Fortunately Judge Munson wrote an account of his journey by river. He made these interesting observations:[8]

I could gain but little information by correspondence or inquiry, as to the condition of affairs in the Territory—where I should be located when there or the best way to go. Deciding upon the river route, I shipped by library to St. Louis, taking a steamer there for Fort Benton, the head of steamboat navigation, three thousand miles distant by river from St. Louis, and it took over fifty days to complete the trip, yet our steamer was the crack boat on the river that season.

Passing Yankton, in the lower part of Dakota, one thousand one hundred and eighty miles by river above St. Louis, we entered a country filled with hostile Indians. Military forts and stockades were besieged by the redskins, and commanders of the forts tried to impress upon the captain of our boat the perils of the trip, and it required no stretch of imagination to guard against possible adverse experience on the way.

Fort Rice, one thousand eight hundred miles above St. Louis by the river, had been surrounded by them for days, it not being safe for even picket men to venture outside the enclosure. Mooring our boats to the shore, Indians interpreted our arrival as reënforcements for the fort, and they left. Colonel Reeves, commandant of the fort, showed us a

poisoned arrow taken from the body of one of his soldiers who had died that day in great agony from its effects.

The pilot house of our boat was sheathed with boiler iron, with peep-holes to look out for safe navigation, and other precautions taken for safety. There was no security in traveling through the Indian country at that date, except in large, well-armed parties, and even then trains were frequently stampeded by the bold dash and dreaded war-whoop of the Indians who swept down like an evil spirit of the wind to help themselves to the scalps of drivers and to plunder from the trains. Many of this day remember how frequently the coaches on the overland route were attacked by the Indians, and how startlingly graphic were the scenes described by those who escaped the peril.

At night our boat was anchored with sentinels on guard to prevent surprise or attack.

On our way up the river we encountered vast herds of buffaloes moving from southern to northern feeding grounds. The plains, at times, on either side of the river, were literally covered with them as far as the eye could reach. They came to the river bank and plunged into the sweeping floods regardless of fear and swam to the opposite shore like veterans in their native element.

The river was full of them; so full that we were obliged on different days to stop the steamer to avoid being swamped by them. On one occasion a stalwart fellow became entangled in the wheel of the steamer, and in his efforts for release, ripped out some of the buckets of the wheel, necessitating repairs. Some fat heifers and calves were lassoed from the river and killed for fresh meat for boat supplies. . . .

In the timber that fringed the river bank, otter, beaver, mink and muskrat splashed into the water on our approach. Lagoons and lakelets are alive with water fowl that sported in security, apparently tame in their wildness. . . .

At Wolf Point, so called on account of the banks of the river, some wood-choppers had built a stockade to divide their time in cutting wood for the steamer, and trapping for furs. They killed a buffalo, cut out what meat they wanted to use, and poisoned the carcass for the wolves The first

night seventy-two wolves came to grief. This was the largest wolf-gathering I ever saw. They had come in from prairie, ravine and timber nooks for a feast, and they lay around the stockade on our arrival at mid-day following their adventure. . . . The captain of our boat made arrangements with the stockade adventurers for the purchase of the pelts on his return.

About one hundred miles below Benton, our boat grounded. On board as passenger was Major Upson, Indian agent at Benton, returning with annuity goods for distribution among the Indians connected with the agency. Some Indians came to the river bank who knew the major. He told them what he had on board, . . . and gave one a letter to deliver with utmost speed to the agency at Benton. After a square meal for the start, and a sandwich for the way, the Indian started, leaving his three companions on the boat as hostages to await his return. In two days he returned. Three days later teams appeared; the boat, lightened of freight, again steamed up the river. . . .

After some delay at Benton we started with mule trains and a prairie schooner for Helena, one hundred and forty miles distant. The trail was sufficiently marked to follow. We usually encamped for the night about mid-afternoon, near a spring or water course. Wagons were drawn up in a circle, horses tethered out for grazing.

At night horses were brought into the enclosed circle for safety, passengers spread their blankets on the ground under the wagons, trusty sentinels kept watch . . . while the music of howling wolves contributed to wakeful hours of nervous sleepers. On Sunday, June 9, 1865, we arrived at Helena, then called Last Chance Gulch.

One of the strangest events in Missouri river history occurred in July, 1867, when the steamer *Trover* was wrecked when some two hundred and forty miles below Fort Benton. Fortunately the *Ida Stockdale* was near, and the passengers were taken off—all except two boys who were asleep in the hold.[9]

On waking up and finding themselves alone, without a thing to eat or any means of defense, and surrounded by

a wilderness wholly unknown to them, they were completely paralyzed by fright; but, recovering their presence of mind they saw that they must find some relief immediately or they would die of starvation. They left the wreck and started down the river. In crossing a small tributary of the Missouri one of the boys was drowned. The other kept on night and day, most of the time back from the river, to avoid the bends and the swamp and underbrush. He had nothing to eat except a little bark and some flower blossoms and did not stop for a moment for sleep. His keeping back from the river caused him to miss the boats and trading posts. Finally, almost famished and exhausted, he beat his way through a dense willow growth to the bank of the river in the hope that some boat would come along before he should die. Shortly afterward a steamer hove in sight—the *Sunset*—on her way up the river. She was a veritable sun*rise* to the poor boy, who began waving an old white hat, almost the only article of clothing he had left. The people on the boat saw the signal and sent the yawl out and brought the boy in. His face was almost raw from mosquito bites, and he was so weak that he could scarcely stand. He was found at a point twenty-five miles below Fort Rice, or 642 miles, by river channel, below where the *Trover* was wrecked. He traveled this distance in nine days. With all the cut-offs duly allowed for, he must have averaged seventy miles a day during this time, and all the while without food. Were it not that the facts seem well established, such an example of physical endurance would be incredible.

Steamboat traffic on the upper Missouri was at its height in 1867. Before June 1 of that year forty steamers passed Sioux City on their way up the river. The fare for cabin passengers from St. Louis to Fort Benton was $300.

The strange contrasts presented to the eyes of those who took passage on the boats at this period have been described by Chittenden:

There were times when thirty or forty steamboats were on the river between Fort Benton and the mouth of the Yellowstone, when all the way the river flowed amid scenes

of wilderness that were in the strictest sense primeval. To one who could have set down in the unbroken wilderness along the banks of the river, where nothing dwelt except wild animals and wilder men, where the fierce Indian made life a constant peril, where no civilized habitation greeted the eye, it would have seemed marvelous and wholly inexplicable to find the river filled with noble craft, as beautiful as any that ever rode the ocean, stored with all the necessaries of civilization, and crowded with passengers as cultured, refined, and well dressed as the cabin list of an ocean steamer.

But with the extension of the railroads to the country through which Lewis and Clark and their successors for two generations toiled for weary weeks and months, the Missouri river was forsaken by the steamboats and was left to the mercy of the encroaching sand bars, the crumbling banks and the snags and sawyers that had vexed the soul of thousands of pioneers. Other trails of the Pioneers are still in use. The Wilderness Road is a highway in which tourists delight; the National Road and the roads from Philadelphia to Pittsburg give joy to the automobile tourists; the Ohio river is still a highway on which a few steamers float; the Genesee Road and the Erie Canal are yet on the map; sections of the Santa Fé Trail, the California Trail and the Oregon Trail are taken account of by the western road traveler. The Missouri alone is utterly neglected and forsaken. On June 13, 1902, Congress abolished the Missouri Commission, and so wrote the epitaph of this great commercial highway of the West.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

(See Bibliography)

1. "History of the Expedition to the Sources of the Missouri River," Vol. I, p. 4.
2. "History of the Steamboat Navigation of the Missouri River," p. 102.
3. "Views of Louisiana, Together with a Journal of a Voyage Up the Missouri River," p. 200.

4. "A Year's Residence in the United States of America," Part III, p. 359.
5. "Over the Alleghenies and Across the Prairies," p. 260.
6. "Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri River," p. 180.
7. Ditto, p. 174.
8. "Reminiscences of a Montana Judge," p. 100.
9. "Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri River," p. 285.

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